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THE

HEBREW PROPHETS,

TRANSLATED AFRESH FROM THE ORIGINAL,

WITH REGARD TO THE ANGLICAN VERSION,

AND WITH

ILLUSTRATIONS FOR ENGLISH READERS.

BY

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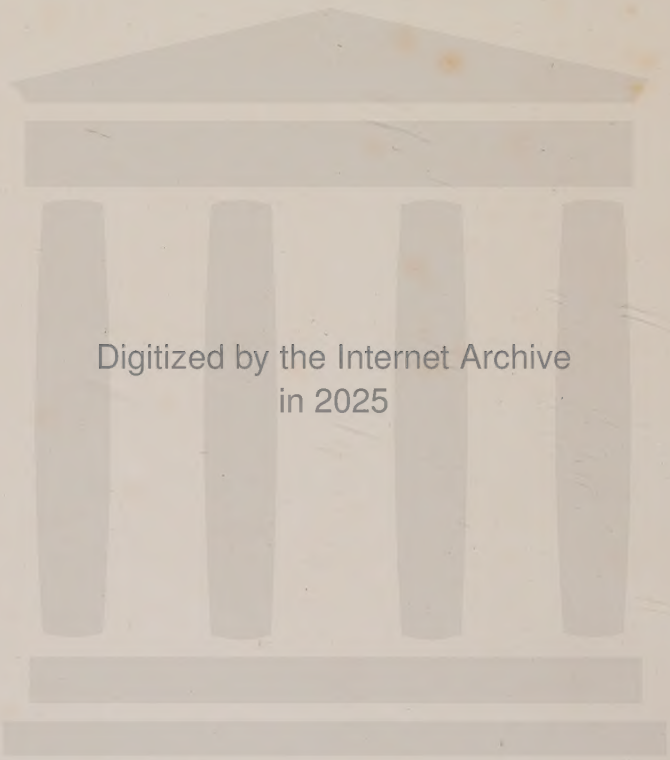
WILLIAMS AND NORGATE:
14, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON;
AND 20, SOUTH FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH.
1866.



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THE

PROPHETS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

DURING THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE.

BY

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"Quisquis bonus verusque Christianus est, Domini sui esse intelligat ubicunque invenerit Veritatem, quam confitens et agnoscens etiam in Literis Sacris superstitiosa figmenta repudiet."

S. AUGUSTINUS, *De doct. Christ.* ii. 18.

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ERRATA.

Page 7, line 25, *for* into, *read* with.

„ 159, line 15, *for* Joseph McCaul, *read* the late Dr. A. McCaul.

„ 398, margin, *for* breath, *read* hearth.

„ 406, margin, *for* month, *read* mouth.

PREFACE.

The object of this work is not to inculcate any especial theory, but to place that numerous class of readers, who are intelligent and thoughtful, but not scholastic, in possession of the mind of the Prophets, commencing with those who wrote under the Assyrian empire.

The method originally intended, was to reprint our Authorised Version, endeared by so many associations, as well as commended by signal merit, and to correct in it only what a consent of scholars had pronounced to be imperfections. Almost I could wish I had adhered to this, and sometimes after leaving our Version have returned to it. Those who have felt in a mechanical task the mind ill acquiesce in a suspension of energy, will understand why I have gradually ventured on a course of greater freedom.

No one would retranslate the Bible for the sake of changes so slight, or dubious in character, as some which appear in this volume. Yet, supposing the duty of faithfulness suggested other important changes as necessary, taste, idiom, even fanciful selection, would claim beyond necessity a margin of their own.

The work aspires to be an improvement, without professing perfection. There is no attempt to make it a substitute for the reader's own power of reflexion, by amassing stores of commentary which have been lavished upon the text; still less to transcribe matter for refutation, though specimens of traditions, once authoritative, and still ob-

structive, have been given. Many collateral topics, of intrinsic interest, are set aside ; the more so, since they have been treated in works of merit, whether Travels, Introductions, or Dictionaries, with which there was no wish to enter into competition. Each author has his own field. Some religious questions, to which a reader might more expect answers, will have light thrown on them by the Sacred writers' own language, or by the comments which it suggests ; may in part be postponed for a concluding summary. Let me here say, no view of Inspiration appears to me dangerous, but such as, taking its stand on a point attained, opposes itself to any fresh accession of knowledge. No estimate of the Bible can be too high, which does not disparage sanctities, or violate charities.

It has been thought right to employ, as opportunity permitted, the usual aids ; such as the ancient Versions, particularly the Septuagint and Vulgate, the latter with a growing sense of its superior, and almost singular merit, where the prejudices of Jerome do not warp his translation, as they constantly warp his commentary. The Targum has been looked at occasionally, seldom by choice. Amongst scholars, a tribute of acknowledgment is especially due to Calvin, a name venerable for integrity, as for piety ; Grotius, learned in an age when learning was the devotion of the intellect ; Rosenmüller, whose ample collection of comments abridges the translator's work ; Eichhorn, excellent in poetical grasp and suggestion, more than in detail ; Gesenius, in his proper realm still, it seems to me, un-dethroned ; Ewald, who will not leave unquestioned, but pardon, I trust, the preceding judgment ; and whose own faculty of divination, compounded of

spiritual insight and immense learning, I only do not praise, because praise from me would be presumptuous; our own Lowth and Newcome, still deserving to be read; De Wette, a master of accuracy; Maurer, an ingenious and suggestive writer; Knobel, of whose instructive *Hand-buch* on Isaiah I have been able to avail myself, though not of his other writings; while for hints, half forgotten, I may be indebted to miscellaneous reading. Neither upon one, nor all of these, is this Version so founded, as to lessen its author's responsibility. If no Continental scholar had arisen, every particular in this volume would hardly have its present form, but the salient points in it would have been brought to light by the internal forces of philology, unless artificial obstacles intervened. No student of the method, as well as the opinions, of our more critical Bishops and Archbishops in Protestant days, Jewel, Kidder, Francis Hare, Butler, Lowth, Cranmer, Secker, Newcome, can dream that Biblical discrimination began with Spinosa, or depends upon fashion in Germany. I say nothing here of Pecock, Hooker, Chillingworth; although the varying tone of Biblical study, as it has reflected more or less an awakenment of life or literature, might be worth lingering upon.

It would have been an agreeable duty to assign each suggestion to its first author, instead of quoting (as I find myself) from Maurer what he had taken from Rosenmüller, or (as I have observed others,) blaming for German neology what the blamers did not know originated with old Bochart. Such rectification may belong to the historian of interpretation, but would require a labour of no proportionate interest to the readers at whom I aim. My guide in

Geography, so far as illustration from it was needed, has been the traveller Robinson, with the aid of Vandevelde's Map.

It would be idle for the work of a solitary clergyman, without the corrections which the vigilance of many minds may superadd, to aspire to use in the congregation. He may hope that the Version, if hardly the Commentary, may be found suitable for family reading; that as a whole the work may instruct persons trained in the school of Butler sufficiently to think the employment of our intellectual faculties, in connexion with our faith, a part of our moral probation or responsibility towards our Maker; that it may aid in critical periods of youthful life men vexed to find their highest aspirations represented as dependent on views of Scripture which they see reason to doubt, or observe denied by men highly informed; perhaps it may enable them to set a limit to doubts extending from the distortion to the truth; at least it may suggest to some in whom the cessation of Academic activity leaves a void, how rich a mine remains little-worked in the reverential, but unshrinking, study of the Old Testament; hereafter, if it should receive a fair measure of approval, it may spare the teacher, in some forlorn outpost, sorrowful years. Some things it teaches which, learnt early and naturally, are innocent as day-light, but forced on men against sacred associations, amidst misgivings and outcries, with the strife of tongues, and with needless consequences fastened upon them in the name of outraged logic, may blight the life that now is, and obscure that which is to come.

Three requests I would make of the reader. First, let not the admitted doubtfulness of some points seem to

imply uncertainty in others cardinally important. The situation of *Kir* or *Sepharad* may be conjectural, and the language from which *Chiun* is derived disputable, with little effect on Amos or Obadiah. If the storming of Beth-arbel has been too positively assumed, as determining the date of Hosea, the result would be to carry up the book from a quarter to half a century earlier, as general considerations render probable. Whether in Joel I have selected the right 'Valley of Thorns,' or what thorns grew in it, I cannot tell. At the 12th verse of the 2nd chapter of Micah, there is a passage predicting destruction, in the judgment of such an array of expositors, Rabbinic, Patristic, Modern, as might seem invincible, if a fully equal array on the other side did not read a promise of prosperity; again, a third company, more critical than the first two, prefer the sense of promise, but trace in it signs of irony, as coming from a false prophet who has just been described. Here are three sets of authorities, any of which might avert censure, but hardly give certainty; much less can my preference for the first, with the addition of a suggestion that the passage describes a past event, presume to ask for more than consideration amongst tentative opinions. In other less striking cases, my claim is equally limited. Although I am as far as Bishop Lowth from thinking the Text supernaturally guaranteed against accidents of transmission, (see his *Introduction to Isaiah*,) I seldom imitate his freedom of conjecture, (except in the Margin, where it can do no harm,) but translate almost always the original characters: for the most part I follow the Masoretic punctuation, so far as it vocalises the consonants; but so far, as it interpunctuates sentences, I

depart from it frequently, without scruple. Doubtless, the persons to whose un-named labours we are indebted for this immense aid, were incomparably better versed in the technical idiom of their own tongue than any ordinary scholar who may presume to criticise them; yet their work, as it appears in books (I am not dealing with MSS.) betrays occasionally, from undue technicality, if not from a marvellous deadness of soul, manifest mistakes. The two closing verses of the 8th chapter of Isaiah, in the Authorised Version, and the instances noted in Hosea v. vi. vii. may serve as examples. Hence, without rejecting Jewish or Christian aids handed down to us, I have frequently found more attractive guidance in the sequence of thought, sometimes in the rhythm of a sentence. It may be that one who observes a key open some doors, will try it upon too many. Half the changes suggested in this respect may apologise for the remainder. The reader's governing principle should be the connexion of thought. Truer than all the Rabbins and Fathers, this guide will enable him to distinguish the conjectural from the manifest. Thus, whoever masters the meaning of *Migdal-eder*, as a place by Bethlehem, Micah iii. 16, (A. V. iv. 8,) and observes how the Prophet's thought travelled from the ruins of Samaria to the dynasty of Bethlehem, will hold a clue in his hand, which no one can wrest from him. He will never again doubt the cardinal meaning and main outline of Micah, though he may hesitate over particular suggestions, or reject some as fanciful.

The same principle will hold as to the most questionable step in this work, the marking by special type texts of which the age is doubted upon internal evidence alone.

It would have qeen a departure from strict right, not to indicate such questions, where they occur. Observation of the texture of thought preceding and following, will shew that the suggestions are not made in the interest of theory, and that, instead of impairing, they tend to confirm, our assurance of the genuineness of the Prophetic volume.

My second request is simply, that words familiar in the Authorised Version may not be so much missed, as to condemn whatever replaces them for no charge except strangeness. The beauty of a Translation is to represent the Original; not to be a record of idiom. If our former translators said in Isaiah that *Tophet was ordained of old,* and meant thereby *setting the place in order,* though flux of language has made them seem to imply a predestinating ordinance, it is time the meaning were given by such a word as *arranged,* though it may suit some ears less. Although the word LORD is sacred or dear, yet if it fails to convey that mystery of unchangeableness which it pleased God to stamp on the word JEHOVAH for those in whose language it is significant, it is well we should not forget whatever the deeper phrase can convey. We need not confound Moses with Christ, by a denial of plurality[1] in their revelations; yet this thread runs through them, that an eternal Will, generating the Wisdom by which it is guided, and breathing Life through all, is taught in both. Though religion bear a scientific side, it does not in its essence grow like other sciences, but needs perpetual clearing from veils. If a version brings a reader nearer to the author, enabling him *e. g.* to read Amos, Micah or

[1] St. John i. 17. Hebrews i. 1.

Nahum more intelligently, its existence is justified, though its phrase were uncouth.

More serious matter opens, when my third request proceeds to deprecate the dilemma objected to such undertakings, that either their alterations are trivial, and may be well disregarded; or they are dangerous, and contrary to a clergyman's duty. True, the Bible as it stands, is good enough to shew us the way to Heaven. Yet if any one considers how texts are handled in preaching, how long controversies hang upon their distortion, and how probably the sacred writers' own meaning, with its natural play of feeling, might convey edification, he may think an attempt to arrive at a clearer intelligence of the book desirable, though it import no new doctrine. He should think so more, if he holds the book sacred. Again, Orthodoxy depends not on balancing one numerical ignorance against another; but on the first principles of the Church, which are teaching truth, and saving souls. It should neither be assumed, that the Church will find the meaning of the Prophets contradictory to her formularies, nor if she did, that she would be unwilling to reconsider her own views in an access of light. Texts may vanish, yet others remain; as a great doctrine, dislodged from St. John's Epistle, finds a stronghold in his Gospel. More commonly, doctrine will retain its reason in some mode of thought, or ecclesiastical practice its recommendation in some social instinct, either of which would be abundant justification, if it were not weakened by special pleadings on Scripture, sometimes reaching to misrepresentations. An infant may be commended to the grace of God as fitly as an adult, for the

weakness of both is their worthiness ; but it is an embarrassment to have to evoke the ghosts of departed texts as witnesses for the practice. It has been shewn that sayings in the New Testament preponderate against Judaic views of the Sabbath; yet few things ever lost our Church more of the affection of religious people, than her attempts to relax the observance of Sunday. The Creed which, from its position we forget sometimes, has an origin later than the Nicene, had once its articles ascribed each to an apostle : it has lost none of its authority by the removal of this fable, although some think it fitter for the school than for the congregation. The 'Descent into Hell' was perhaps first meant of Christ's burial, then of his departure into a place of Spirits, or less definitely, of his disappearance in the Unseen; thirdly, it became his triumphant wakening of lost nations to good news; fourthly, it was his vicarious substitution for men in the pangs of Gehenna. Opinion has in recent generations receded towards the milder, to all but the earliest form. Now, if the latest view is identical with almost the earliest, I cannot discover, why it is less consistent with a clergyman's duty, or why not even more orthodox, than the *Limbus Patrum* of poets, or the burning Gehenna of Calvin. In another Creed, if we strip apologetically the term *Person* of all physical organism and association, in order to convert strangers, we should not re-invest it with such things polemically in order to cast out those of our household. In general, the probability that one holding the spiritual nature of Deity, and interpreting anthropomorphisms accordingly, will come oftener in collision with a system framed (like our standards) anthropo-

morphically, than another whose mental bias is materialistic, and corporealising, seems at first very great, but may diminish on reflexion. Something is to be said for a Protestant view of the words, *This is my body; I am the Vine; I am the Door; Ye also, as lively stones;* God spake by the Prophets, *rising up early, and speaking to them.* Jerem. vii. xxv. xxxv. The point, up to which all our friends see language to be metaphor or symbol, need not be the point at which it ceases to be so.

In result, though not in design, this work militates against Messianic theories. If it should turn out, that those theories are what the Scribes held, and what Christ rejected, his rejection of them, in harmony with his inversion of Judaic sentiments, being one leading cause of the Death, with which, at the cost of his precious life's blood, he ransomed men's souls into freedom, such a result need not be deplored. At all hazards, we must interpret our Bible. A step towards scepticism would not be a step in the right direction; but one away from error is so, even if we were not certain of our next. Nor again, is any one bound to introduce disorder into his own life and convictions, by exchanging half of them for half of his neighbour's, without consistency or other benefit to either.

Controversy apart, it seems inevitable that the treatment of the Prophets as real men, acting from impulse and feeling, in relation to the realities of their time, must bring some loss to those who overlooking intermediate agency, or explaining it away, have seen in the open page the word of God to themselves, finding in it their portion for the day, and counsel in need. How can they bear to

be told of finiteness, spontaneity, passion? or of relations to a society passed away? Against this loss we may count gain to others, goaded into an unhappy state of scepticism, because it was rendered to them in the first instance a duty, by exaggerations which set the Bible against itself and against Christ, as against Nature and the realities of life. If, with allowance for inevitable degrees of information and prepossession, we treat the subject frankly, we may find God's truth wiser than man's fiction. No loss can be irreparable, which has Divine Providence, and human reflexion, and the instincts which grow with a well-ordered life, and histories and hymns of the past, and Christ's doctrine, with principles which do not change, and the presence of the Spirit which created the Book deemed oracular, ever living to supply its place. The Book acquires a new power; it stands upon merit, instead of on prescription. Not only can shepherds and labourers understand that the letter of Prophecy is temporal, yet the spirit eternal, but it has been my happiness never to know a tender or religious mind, which when the facts were explained, did not thankfully acquiesce in the course which God's goodness has taken. Some might not guess, from accounts given by others, that the point in dispute was, whether the Prophets should have their meaning disentangled.

It is as natural for one who recommends anything to diminish, as for those who oppose it, to exaggerate its dangers. But, if the Prophets are not orthodox (which would mean, that our dominant teaching shrinks from the light,) let those with whom the responsibility of power rests, see to it. Nothing could be so little consistent

with reverence towards the Divine Majesty, or belief in a living Providence, as a repudiation, at all costs, of the instruments by which Truth in worship or thought must be ascertained. Whereas, if men on all sides would consider, not how much or how little doctrine can be enforced, but what is our duty towards God in respect of giving peace to minds which can permanently rest in nothing short of the Author of truth and His Will, we might see the right temper, method, and instruments employed. Technical evasion, and technical enforcement, in forgetfulness of either Sunday's teaching or every week-day's learning, might seem alike beside the mark. It would be a poor triumph, to win the privilege of contradicting doctrine which should turn out true, and of infinite import; it would be still poorer, to extort the power of suppressing researches however imperfect, without a field for which, the Scriptures, the common heritage of Christendom, can not be understood, nor minds of deep seriousness find meaning and comfort in Revelation.

*** I have to apologise for transferring, in p. 159, to the late Dr. A. McCaul, the name Joseph, which had fallen under my eye in writing, but which belongs to a relative happily surviving.

PART I.

THE

PROPHETS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

UNDER THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE.

About 800 B.C. to about 600 B.C.

INTRODUCTION TO JOEL.

As we best get an idea of some strange city by ascending a tower or hill, from whence the whole outline and arrangement may be seen lying beneath our feet, so the truest conception of the Prophet Joel will be formed by surveying his work as a whole. A plague of locusts, drought, and death; a day of public repentance and supplication; a happy change appearing as the answer of Jehovah to his people's prayers; followed by prophetic anticipation, first of spiritual renewal among the people, and lastly of a triumphant conflict of the nation with its spoilers, are the features which distribute the book naturally into four parts, or still better, into five. A simpler division would regard the first part of the book as containing a description of the distress with its attendant invitation to prayer; and the latter part exultation in deliverance, passing into anticipations of a future correspondently rich in spiritual and natural blessings.

The Prophet begins with describing the season of gloom, which has already passed. The memory of the old is appealed to for recollection of a like scourge. The merry wine-drinker, the husbandman, shepherd, and solemn priest, all feel the desolation, with which swarms of locusts, like hordes of invaders, have darkened the land. "The locusts have no king," says the proverb (Proverbs xxx. 27), "yet go they forth all of them by bands." The spoiling of the locust and caterpillar appears in Isaiah as an image (xxxiii. 4), but in the Psalms, as a literal event (Ps. lxxviii. 46); and not only from the traditions of Egypt, but from the most ordinary belief of the East, would imply the

wrath of Heaven. The Prophet therefore sees in the successive swarms of old and young, locust-worm and locust-fly, the army of Jehovah (ch. iv. 9). The day of gloom, like a lowering dawn upon the mountains, is a day of Jehovah. The wasting of the land comes of the Divine anger. Therefore the cry to repentance becomes the voice of the Eternal. Yet the element of human feeling is strikingly shewn in the doubt as to the efficacy of the means proposed for escape, "*Who knoweth if he will return?*" (ch. ii. 14.) The instinct of repenting is divinely planted; the call to a day of solemnity has a divine sanction; yet the human messenger dare not promise that the general duty of repentance will in this case obtain a special blessing. Only the event shews, that the gathering of the people and weeping of the priests was followed by deliverance.

If we except only the light thrown upon Joel by a comprehensive survey of it as a whole, the greatest gain which a conscientious study of this book has added to our intelligence of it is the perception that a third chapter begins (ch. ii. 18, A. V.) with the announcement of Jehovah's relenting, and a deliverance already arrived. Seldom is the Anglican Version more culpable, than in turning the past tenses of the third chapter (ii. 21, 23, &c.) into futures, so as to create predictions. If the interchange of tenses, consequent on a Hebrew idiom (see Hurwitz, Hebr. Gr.* § 246. Lee, H. G. § 231-240), renders some of these doubtful, in others, and chiefly in those which furnish the governing key-note, there is hardly room for doubt that the Prophet is speaking of the past. He calls on the land to rejoice, and the people to eat in plenty, for Jehovah hath done great things. It might even be contended, that in iii. 7,

* Of the two Grammars, referred to by accident more than out of preference, the one by Hurwitz is far simpler for a learner; the second, confused, if not erroneous, is likely to retard, if not to mislead.

(ii. 23, A. V.) this restoration of the early and latter rain is represented as following *the teacher to righteousness*, whom Jehovah had given in the Prophet's person: but in a matter so disputable, I have suffered myself to be guided by the weight of authorities, as well as by a feeling of poetry.

But if Jehovah has given temporal blessings, will he not add those of a better kind? The Prophet forebodes that He will. Even on the servants and maids, not merely on the ministers of the altar, the Eternal will breathe visions of truth, dreams of things far away. If a day of gloom is yet in store, it shall be gloomy to the spoilers of Judah. The stars in their courses, and the meteor flags of the sky, sympathising with earthly change, will fight against those who have carried off the young for slaves, and sold them to sin.

The Prophet's spirit then goes forward, as in a song of rhythmical prose, in which indignation at the wrongs of his people, and a trust in the Lord God of justice and vengeance awaken the inward movement, and transactions already witnessed supply the images. Let the nations come, Tyrian, Sidonian, borderer of Philistia, and Ionian merchant. That valley of Blessing, in which Jehoshaphat spoiled the hostile confederates, or the valley of Salt, in which Amaziah smote Edom (2 Chron. xx. 25; 2 Kings xiv. 7), suggests a scene for fresh conflict and decision. The darkening of the locusts becomes a darkness in a day of judgment on Judah's enemies. No more Shishac, nor Arab or Philistian host, plundering the temple; no more slave driver; the enslavers rather shall be enslaved. Jehovah will purge, or be innocent of, the blood of his people, which is not yet atoned. To such days of the future belongs plenty, and to Jerusalem peace.

So simple, fervent, sacerdotal, sternly patriotic, yet gifted with a sense of the righteousness of God, and with

moral ideas, which, if on the one hand they give a dangerous intensity to patriotism, yet raise it on the other out of mere national selfishness, are the spirit and song of the Prophet Joel. We may apply his better words, in often recurring parallel, or in ever growing germination, to the out-pouring of the fresh breath of freedom in the first rebellion of the followers of Jesus against too sacerdotal literalism and formalism; or to the fervent mystics, Dolcino, St. Francis, Thomas-à-Kempis, of the Middle Ages; or to the recognition of the human rights of the slave of dark skin in our own time; but the words were spoken by the Prophet after the measure of his own age, with its limitation of horizon and of feeling.

What was that age? It was after the kingdoms of Israel and Judah had been separated, for the Ten Tribes are nowhere mentioned. It was after Edom had revolted from Judah, for Edom appears as a hostile kingdom, threatened with destruction. Therefore it was later than the reign of Jehoshaphat's son Joram, under whom the revolt was accomplished (2 Kings viii. 20). But it was earlier than the expedition of Sennacherib against Judah, B.C. 713, and earlier than those of Tiglath Pileser and Shalmaneser, whether generals representing, or kings preceding, King Sargon, B.C. 745 and 723, for Assyria has no place among the border nations on whom retaliation is threatened. This ignorance of Assyria is the principal reason for giving Joel an earlier date than Amos or Hosea, who may have been his younger contemporaries. An allusion may be detected in chap. iv. 6, to the disaster which befell Judah from an incursion of Arabians, with whom the chronicler associates Philistines, in the reign of Jehoram (2 Chron. xxi. 16). A similar allusion to the successful expedition of Amaziah, when he slew of Edom in the Valley of Salt ten thousand (2 Kings xiv. 7; Psalms xlvii. lx. ?) may be traced by doubtful conjecture. More

apparently we may find in the anticipation of triumph in the valley of Jehoshaphat, or of Jehovah's judgment, a recollection of the victory of the king of that name in the Valley of Blessing (2 Chron. xx.), although the details of the battle are doubted by critics, who, having little faith in the chronicler, observe them apparently not known to the writer of the Book of Kings. Again, the drought, with attendant famine, remind us of that in the days of Ahab and Elijah, but answer better to the one threatened by Elisha, from which the Shunammite sought refuge in the land of the Philistines—compare 2 Kings vi. 27, and viii. 1, with Joel i. 10, iii. 7. So the polemical aspect towards Tyre suggests the reign of Ahab, but answers as well to a later date. The terms of enmity in which Egypt is mentioned might imply recollection of Shishac, and favour those who place the book as early as the reign of Asa, B.C. 945; but are as naturally associated with the threatening aspect of the kingdom at a later date. A nearer approximation is suggested by the spoiling of the sacred things of the Temple to pacify Hazael the Syrian in the reign of Joash, grandson of Jehoshaphat, which corresponds exactly to the complaint in chap. iv. 5. (Compare 2 Kings xii. 18, and 2 Chron. xxiv. 24.) It is but a step farther to observe Amaziah's victory over Edom, which may have prompted the anticipation with which the book closes; while the fervid triumph of the Prophet may have assumed in the vain-glorious mind of the King a tone of presumptuous confidence. (Compare 2 Kings xiv. 7—10.) If this observation, leading us to place the book of Joel in the reign of Amaziah, about B.C. 814, should be thought conjectural, we shall not err in naming the reign of Jehoram, about B.C. 880, as the earliest, and the reign of Uzziah, about 780, as the latest period at which it can have been written; while the reigns of Joash and Amaziah, from B.C. 868 to B.C. 799, approach most nearly the centre of probability. All

the phenomena of the book answer to the date here assigned. The air of dim antiquity, the unbroken reverence for Jehovah's priesthood, the conscious authority of the Prophet's language, and the obedience paid to him, together with the simple fervour, which turns for refuge from natural calamity to the Author of Nature, savour of an age, which the political relations with surrounding countries have enabled us still more clearly to define.

Any reader who mistrusts the best evidence of a writer's mind and circumstances furnished by his works, and prefers reliance upon traditions which were originally but conjectures, and those uncritically formed, may read in Rosenmüller, how the Jewish Rabbis identified our Prophet, the son of Pethuel, with Joel the unworthy son of Samuel; how traditional rumour placed his origin in Reuben, and his tomb at Beth-horon, though the book clearly connects him with Jerusalem; or how Jerome received an idle fancy that Prophets whose titles ascribe them to no definite reigns, may be placed under the kings mentioned in the titles of preceding Prophets.

It may also be read in Dr. Pusey's Introduction, that the just inference of the great critic Vitringa, from silence in the Book of Joel respecting Assyrians and Babylonians, of a date anterior to Assyrian pressure upon Judah, is an "assumption which originated in *unbelief*;" and that "there can really be no question, that by the "Northern *army*" (this word *army* not being in the text), Joel "means the Assyrian." One who uses such language must identify his own opinions with Divine Revelation, and can have little reason for them, even as opinions.

Referring the lovers of such things to books in which they may be found, it suffices, in a translation of the Prophet's own words, to remark, that the earliest editors of our book appear not to have ventured to conjecture, in their title, the kings under whom the author flourished.

JOEL.

THE WORD OF THE ETERNAL, WHICH WAS TO JOEL, THE SON OF PETHUEL.

1. Hear this, old men, and give ear, all dwellers of the land. Has there been this in your days, or [*say*] if in the days of your fathers?

2. Tell of it to your sons, and your sons to their sons, and their sons to the generation that shall be[1] after.

3. What was left of the young locust, the[2] old locust has eaten; and what was left of the old locust, the fledged locust has eaten, and what was left of the fledged locust, the canker-fly has eaten.

[1] *After*, or other, according to the vowel points, and context.

[2] Whatever names are given to the kinds of locusts, belong to the great swarm, whose infliction the Prophet describes. Hence not palmerworm and caterpillar, still less mildew; but whether various species or different ages are meant, may be disputed.

Vv. 1, 2, 3. Locusts, known in Egypt, and common in the East, (Plin. Hist. Nat. xi. 29; Ludolf, Hist. Æth. I. xiii. 16; Bochart in h. l.) with drought and famine as in the days of Elijah and Elisha, came as a visitation severe enough for record, as in Psalm lxxviii. 4. *Gazam* the grub, *Arbeh* the numerous, *Yelek* the licker, and *Chasil* the consumer (though the names may have had a non-Hebraic origin) were to Ephrem Syrus symbols of the Assyrians (who are unknown to Joel), and to some Jews, contemporaries of Jerome, represented the four great Empires, as in the later imagery of Daniel. More generally by the Jews, and by Jerome in his saner moments, hordes of locusts varying in age or species were understood. Theodoret, and perhaps Cyril, tried to en-

4. Awake, drinkers, and weep; and howl, all wine-drinkers, over the new wine, because it is cut off from your mouth.

5. For a nation is gone up over my land, strong, and with no numbering *of him;* his teeth are a lion's teeth, and he has the grinders of a great[3] lion.

6. He has made my vine a desolation, and my fig-tree bareness[4]; utterly has he stript her, and cast away, so that her branches are grown white.

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[3] *Laviah, Vulg. a lion's whelp* (*catuli leonis*), Angl. an old lion, Bochart, &c., a lioness. Probably the generic word for lion, akin to Græco-Latin, *Leo*, and to the onomatopæic *loving*, used in English of oxen: therefore not to be traced to a Hebrew root; but if to any, to a word of ravening. Certainly it has a masculine plural, and there is no good reason to make it feminine. Comp. Gen. xlix. 9. Nahum ii. 12. Psalm lvii.

[4] Or brokenness, for the reasons given in Bochart.

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graft the figurative upon the literal in a combination not appropriate to passages of this kind, though tolerable in cases where typical ideas have recurrent instances. Degenerating from the abler Jews, Aben Ezra and Jarchi, the later Abarbanel adopts the mystical view of the four Empires. Thus the historical and the mystical interpretations are by no means Jewish and Christian divergencies, but are critical methods, dependent on clearness of vision and the hermeneutical power of an age. Bochart powerfully re-establishes the natural meaning. He was a firm believer in Holy Writ, and has been followed by many believers.

5. As tribes of cranes with Homer, the "nation of the bees" with Virgil, the locusts are called a nation. Proverbs xxx. 25, 26. Maurer quotes a chronicler of the ninth century who describes locusts with *teeth* ("habebant dentes lapide duriores"), and more credible authors describe their ravages by gnawing, ("etiam amaros cortices atque arida ligna perrosissent," says Pliny,) so that poetry might ascribe to them teeth, and more so as emphasising Nature.

7. Wail, as a maiden, girded with sackcloth, over the lord of her[5] youth.

8. Perished[6] are offering and libation from the house of the ETERNAL; mourners are the priests, the ministers of the ETERNAL.

9. Wasted is field, mourneth ground; for wasted is corn, dried up new wine, sickened the fresh oil.

10. Be abashed, husbandmen; howl, vine-dressers, over the wheat and over the barley; for the harvest of the field is perished.

11. The vine is dried up, and the fig-tree sickened; the pomegranate, the palm-tree also, and the apple-tree, all the trees of the field are[7] withered, for joy is withered from the sons of men.

12. Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests; howl, ministers of the altar; come, lie all night in sackcloth, ministers of my God, for offering and libation are withholden from the house of your God.

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[5] Chald. עוּלִימְתָּא.

[6] Hebr. Cut off.

[7] Withered, or ashamed. The kindred forms יבשׁ to be dry, and בוּשׁ to be ashamed, lending each other tenses, as usual in such forms, and passing into each others sense. The root, akin to the English *abash*, and meaning possibly paleness, diverges into kindred ideas, shame, terror, disappointment.

"The first and second chapters of Joel," says Lowth, "shew the descriptive power of prophetic poetry, its "fondness for metaphor, comparison, allegory." The denticulated jaw of the locust resembles to the naturalist's eye the type of the lion.

7. The daughter of Sion (*Judæa desolata*), is conceived as a Bride, awaking to widowhood.

9—13. The Poets of all lands give nature a voice, and make her share man's feeling, as man shares her plenty or calamity. The Hebrew Preacher shews the sanctity of

13. Sanctify a fast, proclaim a restraint; gather the old men, *even* all the inhabitants of the land, to the house of the ETERNAL your God, and cry unto the ETERNAL.

14. Alas for the day! for the day of the ETERNAL is at hand, and as destruction from God the[8] destroyer it cometh.

15. Is not before our eyes food cut off? gladness *cut off*, and joy, from the house[9] of our God?

16. The seeds are rotten under their clods, the garners are desolated, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered.

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[8] Or *the Almighty*, שַׁדַּי *Shaddai*, being the Patriarchal name of the Mosaic Jehovah. (Exodus vi. 3.) The word derived Rabbinically from שֶׁ for אֲשֶׁר and דַּי sufficient, but philologically from שׁדד to destroy, (or less probably from שׁדה to hurt) expresses usually omnipotence or awfulness; but destruction is here suggested by the play on the kindred noun.

[9] From the Temple; or possibly, from Judah, as the family and house of God. Comp. Hosea vii. 1. (A. V. viii. 1.)

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life by mourning the dearth of Jehovah's altar. Instead of the abandoned license which in Florence, London, &c. great calamities produce, or the bloody offerings which the Phœnicians and earliest Greeks practised, he calls for prayer and solemnity. In all ages, when human effort is at its end, an irrepressible instinct bids us cry to God. We may be tempted to doubt, whether unblest seasons are the "days of the Lord," v. 14, or are shortcomings of nature, bound by wider necessity than the law of our convenience; and such doubts are not useless in bidding us exhaust the range of human effort, while the preacher joins the philosopher in bidding us not appease God with cruelty or wrong; yet the instinct remains unreproved by anything we know of the divine government, and our own prayers, v. 18, justified by reason, seem joined by the instinctive cries, v. 19, of brute creatures in distress.

In v. 16, the Hebrew words for *seeds*, *rotten*, and *clods*

17. How the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, for there is no pasture for them; yea, the flocks of sheep are made[1] desolate.

18. Unto thee, ETERNAL, I cry; for fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and flame has consumed all the trees of the field.

19. Yea, the beasts of the field roar each one unto thee; for the deep places of waters are dried up, and fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

II.

1. Blow the trumpet in Zion, and cry alarm in the mount of my sanctuary; let all the dwellers of the land tremble.

2. For the day of the ETERNAL is come; for a day of darkness and gloom is at hand;[2] a day of cloud and lowering, as the morning spread upon the mountains.

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[1] Made desolate; or guilty; *i.e. mourn their guilt*, if from *Asham* to be guilty; and so Ewald, De Wette, and others take it: but desolation suits the context, and agrees with the Hebrew idiom, by which cognate sounds approximate in sense, or lend each other tenses. So the English Version may be right in taking this word, as if from *Shamem*, to be desolate. The Greek has ἠφανίσθησαν, and the Chaldee *Tzadiyah*, in the sense of desolation.

[2] In v. 2 I have departed widely, but not inconsiderately, from the Hebrew punctuation, which the Authorised Version preserves.

(or furrows), are unique, or rare; but, not being theological, are explained with sufficient probability by Arabic and Chaldee.

1. The trumpet used for jubilee, to which it is thought to give name, and for wailing, with its bright sound summons to prayer.

2—5. Every day of affliction is a day of the Lord. So Amos v. 18-20, calls it a day of gloom. So St. John in the Apocalypse is rapt to the Lord's day of coming.

3. A great people *is come,* and a strong; there hath not been like it from of old, and after it shall not be again, for years of generations.

4. Before it devoured fire, and after it consumeth flame: like a garden of delight[3] was the land before it, and behind it a wilderness of desolation: yea, escape from it was none.

5. Their aspect is as the aspect of horses, and they rush as horsemen.

6. They spring, like the voice of chariots on the tops of the mountains; like the voice of a flame of fire that

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[3] *Delight*, or Eden. There is nothing to shew that the Prophet thought of a local Eden, or alluded to Genesis. *Vulg.* hortus voluptatis.

So Christ's disciples in sorrow longed for one of his days of manifestation. The traveller Alvarez in Abyssinia describes "a yellow reflection in the air as heralding an "immense swarm of locusts the day before their arrival." (Burder.) Volney describes in Syria, "clouds of locusts ". . . . the immense number must appear incredible: "the ground is covered with them for miles. The noise "which they make in eating the grass and leaves is heard "at a distance; one might believe that an invisible *army* "*is foraging.* It is better to have to do with the Tartars "than with these little but voracious creatures; one might "almost say that *fire is in their train.* Where their "swarms alight, all the green of the fields vanishes in a "moment . . . . it may be literally said that the heavens "are darkened by them." (*Ibid*) Niebuhr, the traveller, heard Arabs frequently comparing "the head of a "locust to the head of a horse, the breast with that of a "lion." On January 9, 1762, he saw in Cairo "a very "great quantity of them fall on the roofs of the houses, and "in the streets, perhaps tired of the journey." (*Ibid.*)

devoureth the stubble; like a strong people arrayed to battle.

7. At their presence populations are troubled; all faces have gathered anguish.[4]

8. They rush, like mighty men; they climb the wall like men of war; and each one in his path they go forward, and turn not aside their goings.

9. Each one thrusteth not his brother; they walk every one in his path; and in the place of the spear they fall, they are not interrupted.

10. In the city they rush,[5] upon the wall they run;

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[4] *Anguish*, like the boiling of a vessel; or *blackness*, as some fancy, like the marks of fire on a vessel; or according to others, the redness of the cheek, which would be lost. In this last case, the word *gathered* will have the sense of withdrawing. Tavernier describes the Persians as blackening their faces in mourning.

[5] The punctuation of this verse, and of the preceding one is doubtful, but hardly so as to affect the sense.

6—9. Dr. Shaw saw locusts "much bigger than our "grasshoppers; they collected themselves into a body "of about two hundred yards square, which marching "forward climb over trees and houses, and eat up every-"thing in their way. The inhabitants make large fires on "the approach of them, but to no purpose: for the fires "were quickly put out by infinite swarms succeeding one "another; while the front seemed regardless of danger, "and the rear pressed on so close, that retreat was impos-"sible." (*Ibid.*) Arabian writers represent the wings of locusts as inscribed with a legend, "We are the army of "the mighty God." (Sir W. Ouseley.) Archbp. Newcome most justly points to the words of comparison in verse 8, as proofs that warriors are the images compared, but locusts the things described. Nothing can be clearer.

10, 11, 12. Ancient authorities agree with modern in

they mount up upon the houses; in the place of the windows they enter, like a thief.

11. Before them the earth[6] quaked, the heavens trembled; the sun and the moon darkened, and the stars withdrew their shining.

12. And the ETERNAL uttered[7] his voice before his army; for his host was very great; for strong *the host* executing his word: for great is the day of the ETERNAL, and very terrible; and who may abide it?

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[6] *Vulg.* Contremuit terra, moti sunt cœli, &c.

[7] *Vulg.* Et Dominus dedit vocem suam, &c. The LXX turn the tenses into futures.

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every respect. Theodoret noticed the horse-like shape, while rapidity also enters into the comparison. Pliny speaks of the creatures as "burning everything with their "contact." "They darken the sun" (solem obumbrant), he says of their appearance, Hist. Nat. xi. 29. "There "came over our heads a thick cloud, which darkened the "air, and deprived us of the rays of the sun," says the author of a Voyage to Senegal, "we found it was owing "to a cloud of locusts." Specially in Syria, De Thou describes dearth of every thing from an unprecedented swarm, which like a dense cloud obscured noon-day, and fed the country bare. (Thuanus, L. lxxxiv. vii. quoted by Newcome, who suggests the Italian name for locusts *cavallette* (little horses). Jerome says, "præ multitudine "locustarum, obtegentium cœlum, sol et luna convertuntur "in tenebras." His description of the serried march, in which places are kept, as by mosaic stones in a pavement, is of less value, because he framed it to illustrate verse 9, "ut ne puncto quidem, ungueve transverso declinent ad "alteram;" but it has the advantage of his Palestine experience. Theodoret and Cyril (φασὶ δὲ αὐτοὺς στοιχηδὸν ἰέναι) give comments similarly descriptive. Bochart, p. 477.

13. Therefore also now, thus saith the ETERNAL, turn to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.

14. And rend your heart, but not your garments, and turn to the ETERNAL your God; for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in mercy, and repenteth him of the evil.

15. Who knoweth,[8] will he return and repent, and spare behind him a blessing; an offering and libation to the ETERNAL your God?

16. Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, proclaim a restraint.[9]

17. Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the infants and sucklings of the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth from his chamber, and the bride out of her bower.

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[8] 15. Quis scit, si convertatur, et ignoscat? *Vulg.* τίς οἶδεν, εἰ ἐπιστρέψει, *LXX.* Or, as the last verse of Hosea, xiv. 9, so here, "Whoso is knowing?—Let him return and repent and offer sacrifice," etc.

[9] 16. *Restraint*, or a solemn assembly. So above, i. 13, and Isaiah i. 11.

13—18. How does God utter his voice? In things terrible by terror, so that the feeling he inspires finds utterance in voice of man. In nature, by objects which he creates. In history, by results which he brings about. In calls to repentance by the concurrence of calamity with our sense of sin, whether an instinct trained, or rather a sentiment imbreathed by Divine communion. When such sentiments run through the people, kindled by Prophets or organised by Priests, the national temples echo with them; public religion embodies them; signs of joy are suspended; and prayers go up to the unsearchable Dweller of Eternity in words which are the words of men, seeking to move the mind of God, yet breathing a life which God's breath implanted. The human passion shews itself in the

18. Between the porch and the altar, let the priests, the ministers of the ETERNAL, weep, and say, Have compassion, ETERNAL, on thy people, and give not thine inheritance for a reproach, for nations to rule over them. Wherefore should they say among the populations, Where is their God?

III.

1. Then was the ETERNAL jealous for His land, and had compassion upon His people.[1]

2. So the ETERNAL answered, and spake unto His people, Behold me sending to you the corn, and the wine, and the fresh oil, that ye be satisfied therewith, and I no longer make you a reproach among the nations.

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[1] Καὶ ἐζήλωσε Κύριος τὴν γῆν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐφείσατο τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ. Καὶ ἀπεκρίθη Κύριος, κ.τ.λ. *LXX.* Zelatus est Dominus terram suam, et pepercit populo suo. Et respondit Dominus, et dixit, etc. *Vulg.* So many moderns, but Maurer defends against Credner the predictive future.

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sentiment that Jehovah as the national God of the Hebrews will be jealous for his own people, as if their sufferings would be his dishonour. (Comp. Ezek. xxv. and xxxvi.) Though elsewhere we have the nobler idea of the "God "of the spirits of all flesh."

The year 1865 has recalled the pictures of Joel by a plague of locusts in Nazareth and Galilee, described by a Missionary in the Ecclesiastical Gazette for September, and interpreted by his informants as a judgment from God.

1—2. God answers the wicked by terrible things, and the penitent by blessings. Corn and wine and oil are the best answer to a famine-stricken people. The word translated *sending,* is the Hebrew participle, the truest present tense which that language admits. No form of speech could more strongly prove the historical sense, instead of the predictive.

3. But I send the northerner[2] far away from you, and thrust him into a land barren and desolate, his face toward the eastern sea, and his rear toward the western sea, so that his stink come up, and his rottenness mount upward.

4. For *he* (?) has wrought[3] mightily,

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[2] *τὸν ἀπὸ βορρᾶ. LXX.* Qui ab aquilone est. *Vulg.* The locusts are meant, but whether flying northwards, or else why called from the North, instead of from the South and East, is a difficulty. Hence with some a sign of allegory, with others, a sign of text mis-read.

[3] *Wrought mightily.* Or, magnified his doings. Believing these words repeated by error of text, I have printed the first edition of them as a verse by itself, as if the name Jehovah had been dropt; which may have been the case; but they are commonly joined to verse 3, as if the locust host wrought mightily, and then more truly so Jehovah. Thus Jerome says, *superbè egit* for the first, and *magnificavit ut faceret* for the second. I should prefer omitting the first edition, as redundant; and am glad to be sanctioned in this by Archbishop Secker. Or, הגדיל might be an error for אגדיל in the first pers. fut.

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3. The North, the hidden region, as ill explored, or as dark with storms, and the home of barbarian invaders, was usually the goal to which locust hosts tended. It may have been the quarter from whence portions of these were driven back sea-ward, by north-easterly winds. But Jerome's expression, "the South wind brings them *more* than the North," implies that the North wind might bring them; and De Thou's and Volney's descriptions of Syrian locusts place beyond doubt that they might come from Syria; to which Newcome needlessly adds Circassia and Mingrelia. Therefore, without blaming those who conjecture that the Hebrew for *Northerner* should be read as meaning *Defiler*, or *Marshaller*, or as *Destroyer*, we may think the change needless. The Prophet knew best where the locusts came from, and his mention of the quarter of coming or going is a weak argument for changing his locusts into Assyrians, Greeks, and Romans. Even Sennacherib's host, though lost in the desert, was not cast into the sea, much less were the four empires of Daniel. Whereas of locusts, we have innumerable testimonies,

5. Fear not, O land; exult, and be glad, for the ETERNAL has wrought mightily.

6. Fear not, beasts of the field; for the pastures of the wilderness spring, for the tree beareth his fruit, the fig-tree and vine render their strength.

7. But exult, sons of Zion, and be glad, in the ETERNAL your God: for he giveth you the former rain[4] to full measure, and bringeth down for you showers; early rain and latter rain at the first *season*.

[4] The former rain *to full measure*, Heb. to justice, whether of measure or of time—or "the admonisher to righteousness"—and because you listened to the admonisher (Joel) whom God gave, therefore he added showers. So *Vulg.* "Dedit vobis doctorem justitiæ," which gives a tolerable, though prosaic sense, and agrees with the Chaldee. The Latin idiom *justo tempore*, and our English, when the "rain is *due*," may be the best explanation.

that this is what befalls them, and they stink horribly. "Even in our times," says Jerome, "we have seen Judæa "covered by bands of locusts, which afterwards, on a "wind arising, were precipitated into the sea." Their stench, he adds, caused pestilence, "or danger of it to "man and beast." Orosius, the Spaniard, in the fifth century, relates a similar immersion of locusts, and stench from them; the chronicle of Ratisbon, for the year 873, adds a like instance. But by God's mercy the locusts in Joel's time were swept by the wind to less inhabited parts, either about the Dead Sea, or in the Southern Desert and Mediterranean, so that their stink did no harm, but went up as a sign of their destruction. So, whether the locust did great things or not, God did great things in sweeping the pest away.

Joy succeeds to the gloom of Nature. The early and latter rain, precious to the thirsty East, are restored when due. Ver. 9. The produce of lost years is restored; for locusts, says Ludolf, Hist. Æth. I. xiii. 16, "by barking the "trees, are injurious for more than one year." On this verse, Newcome (2 Kings vi. 27) says, "there can remain

8. So that the barns be full of corn, and the presses overflow with wine and oil.

9. And I requite to you the years which the locust ate, the canker-fly, and the fledged locust, and the young locust, my great host which I sent among you.

10. So that ye eat plentifully, and have abundance; and praise the name of the ETERNAL your God, that hath wrought wonderfully with you; and my people shall not be ashamed for ever.

11. But ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel,[5] and I the ETERNAL am your God, and there is no God besides; and my people shall not be ashamed for ever.

12. And afterwards it shall be I will pour my breath upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, *and* your young men shall see visions.

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[5] Though I have considered the tenses in vv. 8, 9, 10, as dependent upon v. 7, and expressing effect rather than futurity, I will not dispute a rendering of them as futures, which would hardly affect the sense.

"no doubt, but that the prophet is to be understood in a "literal sense, as foretelling a plague of locusts":—a remark which, if we change "foretelling" into *describing*, is borne out by the text. And the Prophet's own explanation of his poetical figures here may guide our understanding of similar figures when not explained.

11—12. Israel, the religious name of the People, from their ancestor who had power in prayer with God, and possibly having the cognate sense of righteous, is used for solemnity; though of the two tribes only: or with a hopeful glance towards the ideal twelve. In the better days to which the Prophet now looks forward, the land will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, (as in Isaiah xi. 9,) and not only Prelates and Priests, but simple and rude folk shall be taught of God, (as in Isaiah liv. 13), this

13. And also upon the servants and the handmaids in those days I will pour out my breath.

14. And I will set wonders in the heavens and in the earth; blood and fire, and columns of smoke.

15. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and terrible day of the ETERNAL.

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being God's better covenant, not engaging men to him by formal Decalogues and rituals, but by the perceptions of conscience, as by a law written in the heart. This better righteousness, which no formal law can reach, is described by Jeremiah, xxxi. 33, as a thing to come; by St. Paul, Romans ii., as not unfelt among the Gentiles, (comp. Cicero's Milo, Soph. Antig. 450) and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as taking the place of the obligatory letter of the Old Testament. Whether the Hebrew word for *Prophecy* should be taken actively, as bubbling, or babbling, and descriptive of wrought up fervor of speech (comp. 2 Kings ix. 11, Hosea viii. 7,) or, passively of a suffusion with the breath of God, as with water, is not agreed; but in either case it is clear the idea of foretelling future events with articulate prediction (as distinct from devout or hopeful forebodings) is not intended here. St. Peter naturally applied the passage to Pentecost: but these perpetual promises of faith in the living God have many fulfilments; the time of the Maccabees, and of the latest Psalms, the beginnings of the Gospel, and its many reformations in the days of Savonarola, Luther, George Fox, Wesley, and of those who now seek God, face to face, turning with St. Paul from the bondage of the letter, to the freedom of the Spirit; which is turning from an idol to the living God.

14, 15, 16. In experience of deliverance, the Prophet's mind expands to wider hopes. The images, with which so many poets have heralded civil change (Virgil, Georg. I. 46.6; Ovid, Met. xv. 782; Lucan, Phars. i. 524), pass before his mind's eye. As before the fatal Thrasymene, in

16. And it shall be, whosoever calleth on the name of the ETERNAL shall escape; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be escape, as the ETERNAL hath said, and amongst the survivors, whom the ETERNAL calleth.

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which the strife paused not for earthquake, the Italians saw prodigies of eclipse, and lightning-stroke, and torches in the sky, and as the bloody sweat of the images of the Gods was a boast of the Diviners in the beginning of the Marsic war (Cic. *De Div.* i. 44), so in all times of disaster, at the sieges of Jerusalem, Magdeburg, the Thirty years war, and at the deaths of Cæsar and Charles I., the appearance of meteors, comets, or eclipses, strikes awestricken imaginations with terror. The stars in their courses fight against Sisera. God, says the Psalmist, rains upon the ungodly *snares, i.e.* long trails of lightning, Psalm xi. 6. The Prophet adopts such images of his own age, and of many ages, probably also of his own apprehension, as emblematic of the struggle which is to give his country, already victorious over Edom, a wider triumph. It is remarkable that St. Peter anticipated the "day of the Lord" as coming immediately upon the day of Pentecost. Acts ii. 17, iii. 20; 1st Peter iv. 5—7. And the Gospels, whether written before or after the fall of Jerusalem, by applying to it, as Josephus did, this imagery, justify those who find the second coming of Christ to his people in that catastrophe of their nation. But nothing was farther from the Prophet Joel's mind than his country's ruin in that Lord's day, which was to give "deliverance" in Jerusalem (v. 16). The only escape for the Gentiles in his thought was for them to come over to the side of Israel. Those who survive, can do so only of God's calling them, as our knowing Him is of His first knowing us.

IV.

1. For behold in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and of Jerusalem,

2. Then will I gather all the nations, and bring them down into the valley of the ETERNAL's judgment,[1]

3. And I will join judgment with them there for my people and my inheritance;[2] Israel, whom they scattered among the nations, and my land *which* they divided,

4. And for my people they cast lots, and gave away the lad for the harlot, and the girl they sold for wine, that they might drink.

5. Yea, and what are ye to me, Tyre and Sidon, and all the borders of Philistia? Are ye rendering to me any dealing? Or, if ye are dealing by me, lightly and speedily will I requite your dealing upon your head.

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[1] Valley of the Lord's judgment, of Jehoshaphat. If taken locally, there is a valley near Jerusalem comprehending, if I understand aright, the Kidron within its limits, which is now, but improperly, called by that name. But thus to localise the Prophet's figure is to injure his meaning. Compare Rosenm. in h. l. Since this note was written, I find Robinson concurring. Phys. Geog. P. p. 95.

[2] In this verse I have been induced by the *rhythm* to depart from the Hebrew punctuation, which the Authorised Version preserves. Such a ground, even for so slight a change, is very doubtful.

1—5. To "bring again captivity," is to restore the exiles, not here, as in Grecian republics, banished by faction, nor yet, as in the case of Babylon, swept wholesale from Judea, but carried off in predatory or slave-dealing excursions of the Phœnicians, with whom the light galleys of the Asiatic Ionians may have already vied, or at least their dealers had traffic; as more than a thousand years afterwards youths from Ireland were stolen by Saxon pirates,

6. Whereas ye have taken my silver and my gold, and my goodly treasures[3] ye have carried into your palaces.

[3] My treasures. Hebr. *Machmadai*, from ChMD. to desire (cf. Sanscrit, *Kama*, God of love). *Vulg.* Desiderabilia mea. *LXX.* τὰ ἐπίλεκτά μου τὰ καλὰ. As in Haggai ii. 8, The silver and gold are the desire of the nations.

and from England in turn by Danes. It was a merit of the Hebrew Prophets, that they conceived such outrages on humanity to be offences against the Divine Majesty, though their perception was quickened by an idea of a special bond between God and their nation, which we have learned to widen into the tenderness of a faithful Creator for all who call upon him. Comp. St. Paul, Romans ii. Yet, as God is always on the side of the fervid speaker, the denunciation becomes more vivid, when, as a warrior, He comes forth to requite those who had outraged him.

6—9. Consecration marks the Old Testament more, as sanctification more the New. As Priests are God's servants, yet all men are so, and the temple His house, though heaven and earth are so, even victims which express contrition become His sacrifices, though He feeds not on them, and tithes are His property, though He needs them not. Thus even cups and goblets become the Lord's, though Joash might use them to buy off Hazael (which the chronicler does not confess, 2 Chron. xxiv. 24), and though the Puritan Bishop Deogratias of Carthage might use such things to ransom captives from the Vandals. Even if Joel acquiesced in such surrender, he resents it as injurious, and wishes the nations to come in idolatrous crusade against Jerusalem: so confident is he of the Divine judgment overtaking them. Such pictures of retribution animate struggle, and console defeat. The Germans expect Barbarossa to break again the Papal rod, and the Bretons Lemenic, and the pure Britons Arthur. Man never is, but always to be blest. Thus Hope leads

7. And ye have sold the sons of Judah and of Jerusalem to the sons of the Ionians, in order to carry them afar from their border.

8. Behold me raising them up from the place whither ye sold them, and that I requite your dealing upon your head;

9. And I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the sons of Judah, that they sell them to the Sabæans, to a people afar: for the ETERNAL hath spoken it.

10. Proclaim this among the nations: cry a holy war, rouse the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:

11. Forge your spades[4] into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weakling say, I am a warrior.

12. Hurry, and come, all the nations from around, and be gathered together; bring down[5] thither thy warriors, ETERNAL.

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[4] Spades, or ploughshares, is, with Maurer, reaping-hooks. Sed quale sit instrumentum, certo dici nequit. M.

[5] In this verse the LXX. repeat the ending of verse 11, not from difference of text, but from misunderstanding what they had before them. They took the verb "*bring down*" as an adjective with the article, turned the name *Jahveh* into a future tense, and desperately forced *warriors* into a singular. The Vulgate, with slighter error, has "*occumbere faciet* Dominus robustos tuos," and so the Chaldee, and as Rosenm. attests, the Syriac. Most critics agree with our own version, given substantially above. This verse is a good instance of Philology, without the faintest polemical bias, correcting, with the fullest right, traditional authorities.

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forward nations; at some times consoling exile, at others prompting rashness.

10—13. Such a war is here invoked against Jerusalem, as her own possessors had waged against nations before them, such as the Sacred Wars of the Greeks, and the Crusades of mediæval Europe; though such cries have most frequently found an echo in the Semitic races,

13. Let the nations be roused, and come up to the valley of the ETERNAL's judgment: for there will I sit to judge all the nations from around.

14. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, go down, for the press is full, the cisterns overflow: for their iniquity is great.

15. Multitudes on multitudes, in the valley of judgment: for the day of the ETERNAL is near in the valley of judgment.

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[6] *Vulg.* Populi Populi in valle concisionis; so Angl. Vers. in the valley of decision; both rightly, in etymological rendering. But better for meaning the LXX. ἐν τῇ κοιλάδι τῆς δίκης, Conflict, or judgment.

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whether Jews or Arabs. Hence the fierce extermination of whole nations, so often palliated; though the patriarch might say, "Cursed their anger for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel;" and Christ might warn, "He who takes the sword, shall perish by the sword."

15. Joel's conflict is painted as nigh at hand; but the next enterprise of his king Amaziah against the Ten tribes (if we have rightly conjectured his chronology) was unfortunate. 2 Kings xiv. 10—14. Disaster and disappointment only push the vision forward into the future. What was spoken of neighbour states becomes applicable to fresh conquerors. From Tyre it passes to Babylon; from Samaria to Rome. "Magis de Romanis est intelligendum," says Jerome, on v.v. 5, 6, &c. Even if historical fulfilments are exhausted, a mystical one supervenes. Thus an English traveller (quoted by Burder) observes, "Those spiritualising Jews, Christians, and "Mahommedans, who wrest this passage, like a thousand "others of the Scriptures, turn a literal to a mystical "sense, insist on its applying to the resurrection of the "dead, on the last great day. From this belief the "modern Jews, whose fathers are thought by some of the "most learned to have had no idea of a resurrection, or

16. The sun and the moon[7] have darkened, and the stars withdrawn their shining.

17. Then the ETERNAL out of Zion thunders, and out of Jerusalem utters his voice: so that the heavens and the earth tremble; but the ETERNAL is a refuge[8] for his people, and a dwelling-place for the sons of Israel.

18. So shall ye know, that I the ETERNAL am your God, that dwell in Zion the mount of my sanctuary; and Jerusalem shall be a sanctuary, and strangers shall not pass through her any more.

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[7] Sol et luna obtenebrati sunt, &c. *Vulg.* The LXX. less correctly turns the vivid aorists into future tenses.

[8] Refuge, or place of trust.

"of a future state, have their bones deposited in the "valley of Jehoshaphat. From the same hope the Moham- "medans have left a stone jutting out of the eastern "wall of Jerusalem, for the accommodation of their "Prophet, who, they insist, is to sit on it here, and "call the whole world from below to judgment." On this quotation it may be remarked that the Prophet's meaning here was more mystical than local, though tinged probably by associations: but that the mysticism above described as superadded is a development, whether true or fanciful, out of his simpler thought.

16—19. The image of the heavenly orbs failing is applied in the Gospels to the fall of Jerusalem, and in the Apocalypse to the same or kindred events. The poetic style of the Prophet, which has already used it of the locust-plague, adapts it to the gloom of the nations in conflict. From such passages flow both many figurative expressions of the Apocalypse, and the more decided, grosser, anticipations of the early Chiliasts, of whom Papias is a type. Jerome blames both the Jews and Christian Millenarians for understanding the whole as a picture of the Millennium; "Hæc juxta literam sibi Israel

19. And it shall be in that day, the mountains shall drop new wine, and the hills flow with milk, and all the watercourses of Judah shall flow waters, and a fountain shall go forth out of JEHOVAH'S house, and water the valley of thorns.[9]

[9] Valley of Thorns, or Valley of Shittim ; a valley of Moab, abounding in Acacia trees, near the Dead Sea : Numbers xxxiii. 49; hence the desert, or outer world. Compare Micah vi. 5.

miserabilis repromittit." He understands the enemies as being rather demons and their worshippers, or evil thoughts and sins. He makes Sion mean Christ, the dwelling-place of God. Again, by Egypt he understands persecutors ; Tyre he twists into troublers ; Sidon into hunters; Philistines into blood-drinkers, &c., by a wretched play upon words. Not that the Jews interpreted literally, but with the fault borrowed from them by the Christian Church, pushed forward the event from time to time, and saw persecutors of their race, where Jerome saw those of the Church. Both interpretations are equally removed from the mind of the old Prophet. Yet, if history repeats itself, by fresh instances of eternal principles, and if oppressors are at any time trodden under foot, the old description may become a new prophecy, " Præteritorum narratio est futurorum prænuntiatio," says Augustine, De fid. Christ. iii. 10. And if a holy organisation on a spiritual type takes the place of old Israel in God's favour, it may be argued that the threatenings and promises of the old were typically intended of the new ; intended not by the Prophet, but by the Providence, which wields nations, patriots, tyrants, and their destinies, painting in the past the picture of the future. But the translator's first duty is to explain his author. Divines and Philosophers may dispute elsewhere, whether fresh applications are fulfilments or adaptations. In the 19th verse, water is the emblem of plenty, or of purity, and something of foreboding that his country will be a blessing, as well as

20. Egypt shall become a desolation, and Edom become a desolate wilderness, for the violence to the sons of Judah, wherein they shed innocent blood in their land.

21. But Judah shall abide for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.

22. And I will purge[1] their blood which I had not purged; and the ETERNAL *shall be* dweller in Zion.

[1] Purge, or avenge their blood which I had not purged. From the idea of innocence, implied in vindication, the stronger sense branches out poetically.

blest, appears in the language of the patriot Prophet. Compare Zechariah xiv. 8, xiii. 1; Ezekiel xlvii. 1—13, and more doubtfully, Isaiah ii. 3. The main picture with which the book closes is Israel's triumph, not unmixed with vengeance, and the restoration of her lost children.

ON SOME VARIOUS RENDERINGS.

In the Ancient Versions of Joel, the Greek and Latin agree remarkably in making ch. iii. (ii. 18) describe a past deliverance, instead of predicting one to come. In other respects the Latin is (thanks to Jerome's Jewish preceptors, whom the stricter Ruffinus blamed him for following) somewhat more precise than the Greek. Thus in i. 5, 6, the Greek introduces *εὐφροσύνη καὶ χαρὰ*, as cut off, as if reluctant to admit the cutting off of wine as a subject for grief. The Latin more faithful says nakedly, *periit ex ore vestro*. In i. 8, *Virum pubertatis* may be more correct than *τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν παρθενικόν*. In i. 19—20, *τὰ ὡραῖα τῆς ἐρήμου*, and speciosa deserti, represent a rendering of נְאוֹת which must have been early current, yet which yields in probability to the sense of pasture. Cf. Rosenm. in Psalm xxiii.

In the first nine verses of chapter ii. both versions agree in making the description of the locusts future: an inter-

pretation the erroneousness of which might have been suggested by the *past* tenses in verses 10, 11 (*the earth quaked, the sun darkened, &c.*), and which may have originated as well in a forgetfulness of the nature of the Hebrew tense, as in eagerness to create prediction. In iii. 3, (ii. 20), we have *τὸν ἀπὸ βορρᾶ*, and qui ab Aquilone est, better renderings than the Anglican V., "Northern army," and both suiting the locusts too clearly, for Maurer's explanation of the Hebrew as meaning the defiler, or for Ewald's alteration of text to be necessary.

In iii. 12 (ii. 30) the agreement of *τοὺς δούλους μου* and servos meos, either suggests a suspicion that the pronoun dropped early out of the Hebrew, or implies that the Prophet's deeper meaning of even bondsmen sharing with priests and kings God's holy Spirit of freedom was lost to the Alexandrine and Patristic translators.

Other variations are given in the margin, so far as they seemed of interest to English readers.

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS.

Amos has fixed for us his own time and place. In the reign of Uzziah king of Judah, and of Jeroboam, Jehu's great-grandson, the most prosperous of all the Ephraimite kings, he tended his herd or flock, and pricked the wild figs to aid their ripening, at Tekoa, a pastoral village six miles (says Jerome who knew it well) "to the south of holy Bethlehem," therefore twelve from Jerusalem. Here, amidst wild pastures, bordered by the wilder desert, though *burdened* (as his name *Amos* may also import) by servile tasks, yet gazing on the stars, and listening to the lion's roar, at which the dwellers in lonely huts trembled, the fear of God found him. Such instances of the Breath of God blowing where it listeth are not wanting elsewhere. George Fox says, *Journal*, 1646: "As I was walking in a "field on a First-day morning, the Lord opened to me that "being bred at Oxford or Cambridge was not enough to "fit men to be ministers of Christ; and I wondered at it, "because it was the common belief of people. But I saw it "clearly as the Lord opened it to me, and was satisfied, and "admired the goodness of the Lord, who had opened this "thing unto me that morning." . . . "Did not the apostle "say to believers, that they needed no man to teach them, "but as the anointing teacheth them." . . . "At another "time it was opened unto me, that God who made the world, "did not dwell in temples made with hands." So in the time when the Levitical Priests were extending their power at Jerusalem, and thrusting out king Uzziah from the ministry which Solomon had exercised, and while a ritual of rival pomp, with contrast of symbols rather than of

object, was flourishing under royal patronage at Bethel, this shepherd, untrained in Prophet's schools, felt the strong impulse in the form of indignant truth, which rests not until it finds a voice. Rumours must have reached him of the worship at Bethel, little better than that which king Jeroboam's great-grandsire had extinguished in blood; one whose symbols seemed alien, and which enforced neither temperance on the rich, nor tenderness to the poor. So he rose, not like St. Paul suddenly turned back from his way; more like Savonarola, or Luther in his earlier stages, outraged by the sins of men in a system yet honoured; and like the primitive Quakers rebuking the Stuart Prelates and Kings, he left his few sheep in the wilderness, to preach to the Ten tribes, in the power of a truth which seemed fresh from God. In comparing such a mission with similar impulses elsewhere which may seem less signally divine, it is a true instinct which leads us to recognise in all a kindred principle, and that one which not fanaticism but just reasoning pronounces a calling, vocation, mission; though the greater need of balancing circumstances and of making allowance for our incompleteness on this side or on that, which belongs to the broader development of man's reflective powers, suggests modesty in the degree of directness with which we can say, "the Lord hath sent us."

On entering the land of the Ten Tribes, the Shepherd Preacher finds little signs of a people, such as a highly-gifted leader had brought out of Egypt, and such as had known the dedicated poverty of Nazarites, and the fervid voice of Prophets. Wealth coarsely luxurious and grasping, women greedy, and men oppressive, with all the iniquity which sticketh to the hands in buying and selling, arrest the open eyes which had gazed in the Desert on the seven stars and Orion, and night's death-shade passing into dawn. The occasional stintings and shortcomings of God's

gifts in Nature, which should have reminded men of their dependency on a higher power, had been disregarded. "Let us buy cheap and sell dear, and give us to drink," were the people's cries, as the Priests of Bethel chanted on. "Shall not the Lord avenge himself on such a nation as this," is the first cry of foreboding which such things suggest to a devout mind. Even slight circumstances, or trivial visions, become significant of a retribution due, therefore impending. Amos sees locusts or grasshoppers; they must signify bareness of the land. He sees fire; it seems sent to devour its portion. His thoughts turn inward, and he sees, "non oculis, sed mentis intuitu," Jehovah measuring the walls destined to fall. So the basket of summer fruit becomes a summary sign of ripening to a supreme end. If the thought of famine crosses him, it suggests a deeper hunger; the helplessness of men, not knowing where to turn for direction: though God had read aloud by his Prophets the secret lesson of imminent events—the mystery of design in what seemed but result.

Such visions or narratives of circumstances which the Preacher's foreboding spirit renders significant, formed, it appears to me, the staple of the preaching of Amos among the Ten tribes. Hence they are naturally connected in ch. v. vi. (A. V., ch. vii. viii. ix.) with the account of their impression upon those who heard them. Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, whose words betray a cool estimate of the extent to which "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," addresses the dangerous preacher in words redolent of that policy of Caiaphas which survives to our own time, though not in its harshest form. He does not wish to hurt Amos: let him eat his bread with the Dissenters of Judah, and he may preach to his heart's content; but let him not introduce dangerous truths in the Establishment at Bethel; the people may be disturbed.

The fierce denunciation with which the Preacher answers this warning, does not prove that he did not yield to it. Notwithstanding worthless legends of his martyrdom, he seems to have returned to Tekoa, where Jerome at least saw his tomb; and since he twice mentions in his book the earthquake, which according to the title (ch. i. 1.) happened two years later than his preaching, he must have survived his visit to Samaria by at least two years. He seems to have spent the interval, (with possibly instruction from some trained Prophet, as is thought in the analogous case of St. Paul,) in elaborating into a solemn poem, the denunciations which he had uttered in Samaria, and the thoughts which grouped themselves around the greatest event in his life. For it would be the greatest mistake to conceive of him as singing about Bethel the rhythmical strophes of the first chapter, or indeed any of the poetry down to ch. v. 11, the first six chapters of the Authorised Version. Rather he seems to have written with pains, not disdaining to borrow largely from Joel, (as in schools of poetry, where the method is traditional, every one borrows from his foregoers,) and as he meditated on his denunciations of the Ten tribes, other nations seemed to deserve similar warning. The impartiality of the Divine justice would include the bitter kinsmen of Edom, (too like the Jews to be loved by them,) and all oppressors; though it might fall heaviest on the men of Israel and Judah, whose guilt was aggravated by light. Thus musing, the news of a great earthquake reached him, and sounded as a beginning of the end, before which former troubles would fade into preludes. Then with a sublime enumeration of the titles of Almighty God, iii. 19—21, (A. V. iv. 13, v. 2,) he proclaims a last word as a dirge over the falling, almost fallen Israel. In the same spirit he proclaims to foreign nations in Egypt and *Ashdod* (for which an ingenious but unwarranted conjecture would read Assur,) that Jehovah

is summoning them to see the crimes of Samaria, and to avenge them. Admitting the verbal doubtfulness of some renderings in this part, iii. 1, &c., I entertain a strong conviction that such is the connexion of the Prophet's thought, and lament that our division into chapters (which yet I least of all in Amos pretend to make perfect) should have so obscured the sense. Indeed no Prophet is more poetically systematical, or more logically coherent as a whole, than Amos, if we read him connectedly. My method of arrangement is a compromise with our familiarly sacred chapter and verse, (which is far better than the eye-pedantry of printing in lines,) and though inferior to the massed paragraphs of some foreign translations, I hope it may subserve rather than impede intelligence of the meaning. It may fairly be objected, that a chapter should end at v. 11, where the poetry breaks off; but the succeeding visions are connected, as the narrative justificatory of the preceding song; and the reader who notices the coherence will find himself led naturally to the crash, heralded in the last chapter by Jehovah's standing over the profane altar, and spreading ruin from temple to home. It is a great mistake to transfer this last to the temple at Jerusalem. The title of "The words which Amos saw upon Israel," remains true throughout, so that we may say with Jerome, "Nescio quid volentes LXX interpretati sint, Pro Hierusalem." The clue which gives unity to the whole is the fervent Shepherd's aversion to the over-symbolized worship of Bethel, and to the social harshnesses which it failed to check, while a sense of the unslumbering justice of God awakens his observation to all possibilities of ruin in a rotten realm. Yet after singing the final dirge of Samaria, and in human passion making the Almighty swear never again to relent, the Prophet's heart softens into reluctance to see his people perish. Thus in ch. vii. 7, 8, (A. V. ix. 9, 10) he contemplates

the people as surviving Jeroboam's dynasty, and shaken among the nations, until its offenders perish, yet retaining a kernel of life; and then, unless the Book of Amos originally ended here, he proceeds in the two closing paragraphs to anticipate a restoration of David's dynasty, as the legitimate line of monarchs, and the devastations of Egypt and Ashdod repaired by a restored people in an united realm.

Here arises a grave critical question, on which I will avoid nothing, and exaggerate nothing. There are scattered at the end of several Scriptures, both in the Psalms and Prophetical books, little pieces, not always accordant with the main theme, but singularly appropriate to the exile or the return from Babylon. Thus in Psalm li. after a disparagement of animal victims in respect of what God calls sacrifice, the consecration of our mind, the two last verses pray for the walls of Jerusalem to be restored, and promise bullocks upon the altar. Long before German criticism had awakened, and even before Reginald Pecock had revived for England the creed of Sophocles, Cicero, and St. Paul, that God's word is written in men's heart and conscience, a learned Spanish Jew is mentioned by Aben Ezra, as conjecturing that these two verses were added in the exile to the original Psalms. The reader who has his attention called to this hint, will find many instances to which he may apply it. Thus the 14th Psalm ends, "When the Lord bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice," &c. The 53rd Psalm has the same ending. The 69th Psalm is only a less striking instance, because it may be questioned whether it did not arise as a whole, during the exile. The 106th Psalm is a clear instance of either origination during the exile, or adaptation. On turning from the Psalms to the Prophets, we find many passages which stand out from the context, and ask the reader to

distinguish them. Thus in Hosea, three verses at the end of the first chapter, and beginning of the second, are not only a promise interrupting a denunciation, but by the colour of the diction are peculiar, the phrase *living God*, אל־חי being unknown to Hosea, but familiar to later Prophets. So in Obadiah, though marked on the whole by internal evidence, no less than by his place in the canon, as one of the elder Prophets, there comes at the end what seems most naturally interpreted as an allotment of the country (in idea or reality) upon the Return. A far more splendid instance of amplification will be found hereafter in the grand addition to Isaiah. Even in Joel, the first of our Prophets, there is a suggestion hardly strong enough to urge much, of Judah's dwelling for ever, as if for a time she had not dwelt in her land. In Amos the question is more fairly raised. Do the two closing paragraphs imply the Shepherd-preacher's hope that the downfall of Jehu's line will be followed by the restoration of David's, or were they inserted by such a prophet as Zechariah or Haggai, or whoever aided Ezra in editing the older books? An impartial answer to this question is, that we have no such evidence of the former state of the books as would render such addition impossible; nor yet proof of its having actually taken place. We shall never quite know, how far the labours of Ezra, or of those to whom his name has been given, extended in arranging as well as editing the canon. If it be too much to say with Irenæus (C. Hæres. iii. 25) that Ezra restored or re-arranged by inspiration the Prophetical writings, as well as the law of the Scriptures, which that orthodox Father supposes destroyed under Nebuchadnezzar, at least a period of three hundred years elapsed (from B.C. 458 to about B.C. 160), at the beginning and the end of which such additions may have seemed desirable, as at any stage they were possible, and at no

stage are likely to have been thought wrong. We are therefore thrown upon the internal evidence, which must be tried by our verifying faculties. The result is, that the same class of arguments which lead us to admit the genuineness of most of the Prophets on the whole, compel us to suspect particular passages, such as the one now under discussion. The spite against Edom is very like the 137th Psalm, which certainly belongs to the return from Babylon. The promise of planting and building would be more suitable in the mouth of Zechariah addressing returned exiles, than from the Shepherd of the desert to a nation not yet displanted. Yet such arguments have not the force of demonstration on either side, and I should be sorry to dogmatise on a question of probability. Those who admit the idea of addition, may conceive it to commence—"In that day will I raise up," or "Behold the days come," or with more apparent necessity, at the words, "And I will bring again the captivity, &c." I might incline to an original termination at the close of verse 8 (A. V. ix. 10). But no preference can be certain.

It remains to ask, how far was the denunciation of Amos fulfilled? Not in the reign of Jeroboam, against whose house no sword came from abroad until domestic conspiracy overthrew his son. Nor was the quarter in which the destruction originated either Egypt or Ashdod, the quarters (unless against evidence we read Assur) to which human sagacity had pointed. An empire hardly yet known in Israel, that of Nineveh on the Tigris, (which we may distinguish as the empire of Pul, from the dim shadows of far more ancient powers,) was preparing to absorb the little kingdom of Israel, to which Judah would have been added, if the revolt of great provinces had not preserved it for the subsequent sway of Babylon. Here we see the limits of Prophecy. It is not a delegation of the Divine omniscience, but a foreboding from trust in

the Divine justice, tinged possibly by passion, limited certainly by circumstance. This profound presentiment is something far nobler than mere fits of nervous agitation, or tricks of physical *clairvoyance,* which, even if occasionally associated with its practice, have not I think left traces on the record of Hebrew Prophecy. A sort of parallel appears in George Fox's judgment upon a woman's prophesying the return of Charles II. He says, "I saw her prophecy was true, and that a great stroke "must come upon them in power, *for they that had then "got possession were so exceedingly high, and such great "persecution was acted by them.*" Journal, year 1658. Such prescient inferences from faith in the moral order of God's world have often come true. So the great Reformation of the Church and the Revolution of France were felt due, long before they came. Thus Amos's denunciation was fulfilled, though neither in the time nor by the instruments which he expected. Let us thank God, that in all ages he gives men light enough for their guidance, and not a written memory in the dark of a light once bright, but quenched.

Of the later days of Amos, and whether he survived his mission by more than two years, is not known. His words retain their life of passion, and the power which a Breathing higher than mere human passion has given them.

AMOS.

THE words of Amos, who was of the Shepherds of T'ekoa, which he saw upon Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, Joash's-son, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. And he spake:

1. The ETERNAL out of Zion thunders,[1] and out of Jerusalem utters his voice; therefore mourn the pastures of the shepherds, and withers the top of Carmel.

2. Thus saith the ETERNAL, For three sins of Damascus

[1] Thunders, lit. Hebr. *roars*. Vulg. rugiet. LXX. ἐφθέγξατο, but comp. Psalm xviii. 14. Mourn and wither: are the præterite, so connected with the present of the first clause, as to describe its effect; or even to enjoin what its effect should be.

Amos, a chief among herdsmen, as technical idiom suggests, or more naturally, one from among them, penetrated with Ephraim's wickedness, and hearing of an earthquake which seemed to verify his warnings, thus elaborates a poem in which his past visions, and their little success, will be introduced. How far the elaboration was aided, or finished by some editor among the Prophets, we have no means of saying.

1. Before calamities fall upon the circle of guilty realms, the Prophet hears as it were the voice of the Eternal in thunder roaring, not from Bethel, where he was mis-worshipped with idol symbols, but from Mount Zion loved as the Psalmist deemed (Psalm lxxxvii. 2) more than Gerizim.

2. Though other sins of the Syrians had been overlooked, their tripling and quadrupling them by cruelty will touch the heart of God. The Shepherd-Prophet, gentler than King David and the old Syrian kings, and

and for four I will not turn it back; for their crushing Gilead with harrows of iron;[2] 3. But I send fire into the house of Hazael, that it devour the palaces of Benhadad, 4. And I shiver the bar of Damascus, and cut off dweller from Aven's vale,[3] and holder of sceptre from the abode of Eden, and the people of Aram shall go captive towards Kir, saith the ETERNAL.

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[2] Harrows of iron. LXX. *πρίοσι σιδηροῖς*. Vulg. plaustris ferreis. Hence some compare Jabin's chariots, Judges iv. 3. More correctly David's inflictions on the Ammonites, 2 Sam. xii. 31.

[3] *Aven*, not, as Jerome, iniquity, *i.e.* idolatry: nor necessarily, as the Greek Ων suggests, an error for אוֹן, in the sense of the Syrian Heliopolis= Baalbek: but probably, as it stands, a name for the pleasant valley of Damascus. The Greek translators, in Egypt, may have thought of the Egyptian Heliopolis. Paradise—Hebr. Eden, called by Ptolemy, Παράδεισος, a valley of Libanus. Here the LXX. have Χαρράν. On *Kir*, see 2 Kings xvi. 9, where the Assyrian carries off the Aramites to Kir, supposed a region on the Caspian called from the river Cyrus; used largely for Armenia. Yet this could hardly be the mother country of the Syrian race, as seems implied below, chap. vii. 6. At all events Jerome and others are wrong in dreaming of Cyrene. The LXX. curiously read *ἐπίκλητος*.

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having his feelings quickened by the affinity of the tribes beyond Jordan, invokes vengeance against Damascus. What he sighs for in foreboding, King Ahaz asked by embassy, and obtained from Tiglath-Pileser the removal of some of the Syrians into Assyria, thereby fulfilling this denunciation; unless we suppose the words *to Kir*, or *Kirwards*, added to the Prophet's song a few years afterwards by its first editor: which mixed considerations, (somewhat less in this case the rhythm than the event,) suggest as possible. (Comp. 2 Kings xvi. 9.)

5, 6. If Syria is punished, why not the Philistines, the remnant of that civilised race, which once lorded it over the ruder tribes, but now so fading that their deities, *e.g.* Baal-zebub, the God of Ekron, as Azazel the averting or appeased Dæmon of Leviticus, xvi. 26, and afterwards Pan and the Dryads in Europe, become degraded by popular fancy into demons. The expedition of Uzziah, which Amos

5. Thus saith the ETERNAL, For three sins of Ghaza and for four, I will not turn it back; for their transporting a wholesale transportation[4] to give captives to Edom; 6. But I send fire upon the wall of Ghaza, that it devour her palaces; and I cut off dweller from Ashdod, and holder of sceptre from Ashkalon, and turn my hand against Ekron, and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith my Lord, the ETERNAL.

7. Thus saith the ETERNAL, For three sins of Tyre, and for four, I will not turn it back; for their giving captive to Edom a wholesale transportation, and they remembered not the bond of brothers;[4] 8. But I send fire on the wall of Tyre, that it devour her palaces.

9. Thus saith the ETERNAL, For three sins of Edom,

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[4] *Transportation.* Heb. גָּלוּת Not the civic exile of Greek and Roman towns; nor necessarily the captivity of prisoners sold as slaves, though here it is so; but the compulsory migration with which countries have been often depopulated, chiefly by Eastern conquerors, as Persians and Tartars. Comp. Herodot. vi. 20, i. 155. The Greek fragments of Tyrtæus. Gibbon, ch. LXIV. A rare instance in England is one of the Hyde family transporting the village of Childerley.

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may have seen preparing, suggests a cry of woe to them. (2 Chron. xxvi. 6, 7.) So Gaza, Ashdod, Ascalon, Ekron, all Philistine towns, lying westwards, have suffered the reverses and recoveries of ancient cities, such as Æschylus, Homer, Livy, describe; but in no special degree beyond others in the track of Assyrian, Babylonian, Macedonian, Roman, and Arab conquerors. Compare 2 Kings xix. 11, 12, with Isaiah viii. 3, and Isaiah xiii. 6—10.

7, 8. What will be the fate of Tyre, fortified amidst her waters?—besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, and imagined to have been captured by him, but destroyed by Alexander, yet subsequently recovered wonderfully, it comes here within the circle round which the Prophet glances.

9, 10, 11. Special bitterness tinges the reproaches

and for four, I will not turn it back;[5] for his pursuing with the sword his brother, and destroying his compassions, 10. And his anger rent perpetually, and his wrath endured for ever; 11. But I send fire upon Teman, that it devour the palaces of Bozrah.

12. Thus saith the ETERNAL, For three sins of the sons of Ammon and for four, I will not turn it back; for their cleaving the pregnant women of Gilead, in order to enlarge their border; 13. But I kindle fire on the wall of Rabbah, that it devour her palaces, with shouting in the day of battle, with whirlwind[6] in the day of storm; 14. And their king shall go into exile, and his princes together with him, saith the ETERNAL.

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[5] *Turn him back*, either for repentance, or in relenting upon his entreaty. Non convertam, *Vulg.* Better perhaps, *non irritum faciam*, will not revoke my sentence.

[6] *With whirlwind.* Or, with storm in the day of whirlwind.

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against the Edomites descended from one womb, but alienated by mutual encroachments, Israel's conquests, Edom's rebellion, and vindictive as well as profitable marauding, until at length, under Roman rule, Petra enjoyed a prosperity which the city of Solomon might envy. We need not doubt that Edom had its share of trouble from Assyrians or Babylonians, as well as from its Arab kinsmen, but it would be straining the figures of the Prophet, and almost a blasphemy against Providence, to suppose any other decree of desertion and solitude, than such as misgovernment and exhaustion, with the changed course of trade and civilisation, naturally bring about. True, that Nature executes the will of God; but on wider conditions than the execrations of tribes at feud.

12. The Ammonites, having defended their land with better success than Moab and Midian, against the tribes as they pushed their way from the desert of the South towards Canaan (Numbers xxi. 24), repaid the hatred with

15. Thus saith the ETERNAL, For three sins of Moab and for four, I will not turn it back; for his burning the bones of Edom's king into lime; 16. But I send fire upon Moab, that it devour the palaces of the cities,[7] and Moab dieth in tumult, in shouting, in the sound of trumpet, 17. And I cut off judge from its midst, and slay all its princes with him, saith the ETERNAL.

[7] The Cities, or *Kerioth*, originally a descriptive term, but appropriated as a local name to a town in Moab, and to one in Judah. The words Kir, Kereth, Kiriath, Kiriathaim, Kirioth, are ill separated in technical grammar; all representing a most ancient root for a fortified place. Comp. Latin Carcer, and British Caer, Caerau, the latter wrongly identified with Castra.

which their origin is described in Hebrew legend, and retaliated on Gilead the cruelties which their kindred or neighbour Midianites had suffered from the Nomad invaders, at the dictation probably of warrior priests. Numbers xxxi. 8—18. Amos might have blamed such outrages if inflicted by his own people, but feels their character more acutely from the stranger. Rabbah was used cruelly by David. 2 Sam. xii. 31. Its name seems to occur in the Hebrew of Psalm xlv. 16, and hence its king's daughter has been fancied Solomon's bride, addressed in that Psalm. Under Ptolemy Philadelphus, Rabbah revived as Philadelphia.

15, 16, 17. Moab pastoral and rude like Ammon, but less fortified or fortunate in resisting the Hebrews, paid tribute of sheep, and rebelled alternately. (Numbers xxii. 39, 2 Kings iii.) The burning of the king of Edom's son is some cruel act not elsewhere recorded, and distinct from the sacrificial immolation of the Moabite Prince, (reminding us of the Heraclidæ and Phœnissæ,) which struck the Israelite foe with awe. 2 Kings, *ibid.* For the threatening, comp. Isaiah xiv., where it may well have been suggested by frequent Assyrian invasions; though it seems an ancient denunciation repeated.

II.

1. Thus saith the ETERNAL, For three sins of Judah, and for four, I will not turn it back; for their rejecting[8] the law of the ETERNAL, and his statutes they observed not, but their lies[9] made them wander, which their fathers walked after; 2. Therefore send I fire upon Judah, that it devour the palaces of Jerusalem.

3. Thus saith the ETERNAL, For three sins of Israel, and for four, I will not turn it back; for their selling the guiltless and the needy for the sake of two shoes:

4. They that pant[1] for the dust of the earth upon the head of the poor, and turn aside the way of the lowly, and a man and his father go to the same girl, to profane the name of my holiness:

5. And upon garments wrested in pledge they recline by every altar, and wine of those from whom fines are wrung they drink in the house of their gods.

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[8] *Rejecting.* Heb. מאס *Maas*, the word out of which the theological term "Reprobation" is developed, but meaning, in the Old Testament, rejection after trial, or disapproval, as in Psalm lxxviii. 60—67.

[9] *Lies, i.e.* idols, or pretended deities. Comp. 1 Cor. viii. 4, Greek, τὰ μάταια.

[1] *Pant for.* Either coveting the morsel of the poor—or better, eager to throw the dust of contempt upon them.

1, 2, 3. Nothing could be more natural to the Hebrews than to hear ruin denounced on their national foes, as by Zedekiah son of Chenaanah against the Syrians, 1 Kings xxii. 11, (and desired by Balak against the Hebrews,) but the faithful Shepherd-Preacher has a word for Judah and Israel, to which all hitherto has been but preface. Two verses suffice to warn Judah against self-deluding complacency, and the great subject of the book comes on as Woe to Ephraim, oppressive, sensual, forgetful of God.

4, 5. This wringing out fines and pledges from the

6. Yet had I destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height was as the cedars' height, and who was sturdy as the oaks: yet destroyed I his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath.

7. Even I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and caused you to walk forty years in the wilderness, to inherit[2] the land of the Amorite,

8. And I raised up of your sons for prophets, and of your prime for consecrated[3] ones; is not so even this, sons of Israel, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

9. Yet ye made the consecrated ones drink wine, and upon the prophets ye laid command, saying, Ye shall not prophesy.

10. *Now* behold, I crush[4] *all* beneath you, as the waggon crusheth that hath her full of sheaf.

11. So perisheth flight from the swift, and the strong

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[2] *Inherit, i.e.* dispossess.

[3] *Consecrated*, or Nazarites. Separated by vows, as Samson, Samuel, John the Baptist. Prime: or youths.

[4] *Crush. Vulg.* "Stridebo subter vos, sicut stridet plaustrum onustum fæno." English, "I am pressed,"—as if men loaded God's patience with the burden of their sins.

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needy, by men who fed coarsely to their full, with looseness of life, is in itself hateful, and not less so for the air of religious observance with which it is done.

6, 7, 8, 9. It becomes worse in a people, whose traditions (even if not yet embodied in a completed literature) pointed to providences in the days of old, large-limbed races vanquished, preachers of righteousness raised up, and men consecrating themselves in severe saintliness as servants of a holy God; but a rude and materialised people had set itself against remembrances of a higher standard of life.

10—13. As the loaded waggon crushes all beneath it,

shall not hold firm his strength, nor warrior deliver his life;

12. Nor shall handler of the bow stand, nor light of foot[5] escape, nor rider of horse deliver his life.

13. But the firm of heart among the warriors shall flee naked in that day, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

14. Listen to this word which the ETERNAL hath spoken against you, sons of Israel, against all the family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only I know of all the families of the earth; therefore *now* I visit upon you all your iniquities.

15. Can two walk together, unless they are acquainted?

16. Doth a lion roar in the forest, if he have no prey? doth the young lion utter his cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?

17. Doth a bird fall upon trap on the ground, if no snare be set for her? doth one lift up a trap from the ground, if he hath taken nothing at all?

18. If trumpet sound in a city, shall not the people be alarmed? if evil be in a city, hath not the ETERNAL wrought it?

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[5] Of foot; or, on his feet.

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so the wheels of destiny, that is of judgment, will crush might, and weaken valour.

14. Such a word of warning concerns all who think themselves chosen, and favourites of heaven.

15. How can they be God's people, with no feeling of his righteousness?

16—20. As a fitness of things binds even the wild creature's cry, the fowler's art, and all events and causes, so thoughtful men, with any power of vision, must trace

19. Surely the Lord, the ETERNAL, doeth nothing, but he revealeth His secret[6] to His servants the prophets.

20. The lion roareth, who will not fear? the Lord the ETERNAL hath spoken, who can but prophesy?

III.

1. Proclaim in the palaces at Ashdod, and in the palaces in the land of Egypt, and say, Assemble yourselves upon the mountains of Samaria, and see the great tumults in her midst, and the oppressed within her.

2. For they know not to do uprightness, is the utterance of the ETERNAL, who store up violence and spoil in their palaces.

3. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, the ETERNAL, BESIEGE ROUND ABOUT THE LAND,[7] and he bringeth down from thee thy strength, so that thy palaces are spoiled.

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[6] *His secret.* Hebr. סוֹדוֹ. Gr. *παιδείαν.* A very remarkable rendering, as shewing that what God reveals to his Prophets is the secret meaning of events, or the principle which serves as a clue to dispensations otherwise obscure.

[7] *Besiege,* or *distress, round about the land;* (scilicet legendo צָרַר). The LXX. Tyre, is a mistake; scilicet, *Τύρος, κυκλόθεν ἡ γῆ σου ἐρημωθήσεται,* but tends to justify the pointing which I have adopted: or, as the text is pointed, "*Lo,* an enemy, even round about the land, and he shall bring down thy strength;" which is a barely defensible ellipse. Others translate, "Lo, distress and encircling of the land;" which is supported by the Latin, "*Tribulabitur, et circuietur Terra;*" but since סָבִיב a circuit, or neighbourhood, is never so used for besieging; (as the Western Circuit is not besieging Exeter,) I have ventured to take צָרַר as a verb, and understand it as the command to the invaders; either applying הוֹרִיד to the invader, or to Jehovah.

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in sins, sorrows, reverses, a secret lore, which an Eternal Spirit impresses on spiritual men.

1, 2, 3. Let the voice of destiny, the sign of God's Providence, waken Egypt and Philistia, (not however Assyria, which is not here mentioned, unless *Ashdod* should be *Assur,*) that their hosts may bring distress on a land so meriting it by swelling and spoil.

4. Thus saith the ETERNAL, As the shepherd rescueth from the lion's mouth two legs or the mincing of an ear, so the sons of Israel, the dwellers in Samaria, shall be rescued *as* in the corner of a bed and in the damask[8] of a couch.

5. Hear and bear witness against Jacob, is the saying of the Lord, the ETERNAL, the God of hosts.

6. Surely in the day of my visiting the sins of Israel upon him, when I visit for the altars of the House of El [Bethel], when the horns of the altar are bent, and fall to the ground, ...

7. Then will I smite the winter house with the summer house,[9] and the houses of ivory shall perish, and many houses shall come to an end, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

8. Hear this word, ye well-pastured cows[1] which are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the needy, which crush the poor, which say to their lords, Bring to us that we may drink.

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[8] *Damask*, or coverlet. The older Versions understood Damascus, unless "*in Damasci grabato*" be an exception. Most critics understand a *silken*, or other costly, coverlet, following the Masoretic points בְּדִמֶּשֶׂק, and finding an Arabic cognate. Yet most, or all, take it as reproach for luxury. I fear I am alone in taking it as descriptive of the smallness of number saved. Only a bed-full, or quilt-full, out of all Samaria.

[9] Ewald has preceded me in so linking the clauses, as to make the judgment on the Temple fall simultaneously on dwelling-houses.

[1] *Well-pastured cows.* Hebr. Cows of Basan, a place of fat pastures. The *Word* addressed to them includes the proclamation to invaders from afar, and the subsequent suffering of them and their darlings.

4—7. Hardly a bed-full, or a damask or silken quilt-full shall survive out of all the city, when the wrath comes in earnest, but in the day when Temple full of symbols falls, houses full of luxury shall fall too.

8—10. Let the well-pastured dames, whose selfish pride urges on their lords to covetousness, hear what con-

9. By His holiness the Lord, the ETERNAL, hath sworn,
Behold days are coming upon you, when ye shall be taken
away with sharp prongs, and your offspring with fishing
harpoons.

10. Then at breaches shall ye go forth, each one
straight before her, and cast away[2] *your offspring as ye go*
towards the harem, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

11. Come to Bethel and sin; at Gilgal multiply sin;
and bring each morning your sacrifices, and every third
day[3] your tithes.

12. And burn of leaven a thank-offering, and cry and
proclaim free-will offerings; for so have ye loved, sons of
Israel, is the saying of the Lord, the ETERNAL.

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[2] *Ye shall cast, &c.*, Gr. *ἀποῤῥιφήσεσθε εἰς τὸ ὄρος τὸ Ρομμὰν.* Lat. Projiciemini in Armon. And some MSS. read the verb *cast* in the passive, (Hophal). But since most MSS. read the active (Hiphil) *cast*, so as to require an accusative, I supply one from the preceding verse. The word הַהַרְמֹנָה is most simply taken as the Palace, or Harem, of the conqueror; but might be the hill-country, (as Matt. xxiv. 16,) and was anciently understood of Armenia, or some similarly named land of exile. The alteration of Ewald, introducing the feminine of Rimmon, as an idol to be thrown away is an ingenious conjecture, but needless.

[3] *Third Day.* So the Hebrew. The A. V. third year, would refer to the Mosaic law.

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cerns them. They in the day of doom will be hunted like fish, and they shall be cast off, or rather their children will be cast down by them, as each escaping through a broken wall flies to the hills, or as each driven, like a captive cow, moves downcast in a straight line to the victor's harem, slaves instead of mistresses.

11, 12. If they are hardened, let them sin on, with solemn offerings, whether prompted by the Levitical law, or suggesting it subsequently, but now arrayed in the midst of image-worship, or accompanied by vicious lives, and so unfit for Him who will be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

13. I too gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and lack of bread in all your places, yet ye returned not to me, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

14. I too withheld from you the rain, when there were yet three months to harvest, and I rained upon one city, while I rained not upon another city; one piece was rained upon, while the piece on which it rained not withered.

15. So two and three cities wandered to one city to drink water, and were not satisfied, yet ye returned not to me, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

16. I smote you with blight and with blasting;[4] the multiplying of your gardens and of your vineyards, and your fig-trees and your olives the locust ate, yet ye returned not to me, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

17. I sent upon you pestilence in the way of Egypt;[5] I slew with the sword your choice youth, with carrying away your horses, and I made the stink of your camp mount even in your nostrils, yet ye returned not to me, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

18. I overthrew amongst you, as God's overthrowing of Sodom and of Gomorrhah, and ye were as a brand

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[4] *Blasting.* Heb. yellowness, as of faded corn. The Hebrew punctuation which shades this verse into double clauses, though doubtful, has been preserved above.

[5] *Way of Egypt.* So Hebrew. Whether in Egyptian fashion, (as in Isaiah xi. 1—3,) and so "an Egyptian plague;" or more simply, on the road to Egypt, when the Hebrews sought alliance there. (Hosea vii. 11.)

13—18. Yet many providences, however seemingly casual, might have reminded men who live on God's earth, breathe his air, and eat his gifts of fruit and corn, having the breath of their nostrils only at his pleasure, how dependent were they and all they owned, and how their service was due to God.

rescued from burning, yet ye returned not to me, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

19. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, Israel, *and* even because thus I am doing unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, Israel.

20. For behold he that fashioneth the mountains, and createth the wind, and telleth to man[6] what is his thought, that maketh the dawn darkness, and trampleth on the high places of the earth, whose name is the ETERNAL, the God of hosts,[7]

21. Listen to this word which I bear *from Him*,[8] a dirge over you, House of Israel, The Virgin of Israel is fallen, and shall not rise again; she is left forlorn upon her soil; there is none to raise her up.

22. For thus saith the Lord, the ETERNAL, The city that went forth by a thousand shall have a hundred remnant, and she that went forth by a hundred shall have ten remnant to the House of Israel.

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[6] *What is his thought.* Heb. מַה־שִּׂחוֹ Vulgate, Eloquium suum. LXX., *τὸν Χριστὸν αὐτοῦ*, a curious and instructive error; which if it had happened to be quoted by an Evangelist as a current saying amongst the Galilean peasantry, would have been deemed an article of the Christian faith.

[7] Vv. 20, 21. I had feared myself alone in taking verse 21 as the apodosis, or conclusion, to which the preceding verses are introductory; but Kimchi had suggested the same; and Ewald in connexion of ideas, if not in form of syntax, seems to agree. Otherwise verses 19, 20, would be an introduction to nothing. But our division of chapters has here obscured the syntax, and throws interpreters astray.

[8] V. 21. Which I bear *from Him*. Or, which I Jehovah lift over you.

19—21. Since all has been vain, God who has so many claims on man's awe by his majesty in nature, and his breathing in conscience, has one last word to say; no longer warning not to fall, but a dirge over the fallen.

22. A tenth only shall survive, as a sprinkling out of the Ten tribes.

IV.

1. For thus spake the ETERNAL to the House of Israel, Seek me, and live.

2. But seek not Bethel, and come not to Gilgal, and cross not over to Beersheba; for Gilgal shall go[1] captive goings, and *the sanctuary of* Bethel shall become desecrate.

3. Seek ye the ETERNAL, and live; lest he burst like fire *on* the house of Joseph, and it devour, and Bethel have none to quench it.

4. Ye that turn judgment to wormwood, and they that have let guiltlessness fall to the earth.[2]

5. *Seek* Him that maketh the star-group,[3] and the giant-star, and that turneth death-shade into morning, and darkeneth day into night, who calleth to the waters of the sea and poureth them on the face of the earth, whose name is the ETERNAL;

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[1] *Gilgal shall go.* There is an alliteration in the Hebrew words, such as the Welsh Bards delight in; which my English faintly imitates.

[2] The punctuation of this verse is doubtful, if not the sense. Newcome, see below v. 9, (A. V. vi. 12) alters ארץ into ראש, and translates, "Ye that turn judgment into wormwood, and righteousness into gall. They have left Him that maketh the Pleiades, &c." A conjecture in many respects happy, but wanting proof.

[3] The *Group* and the *Giant*, כִּימָה and כְּסִיל are explained, rather than translated, as the Pleiades and Orion. Jerome says, "Ipse est Creator *Arcturi*, qui Hebraicè *Chima* dicitur [? *Cumulus*], et a Symmacho et Theodotione εἰς Πλειάδα vertitur, quem vulgo Bootem vocant . . . . quodque sequitur, Oriona, qui Hebraicè dicitur *Chasil*. . . . Hebræus qui nos in S.S. erudivit. . . . interpretari putat splendorem et significare generaliter astra fulgentia."

1—3. Warnings had been enough.

4. Men forgetting God, inverted all the laws of his justice.

5—7. They had left (or listened not to His command, *Seek*,) the Maker of all the worlds, (Compare Job xxxviii. 31.)

6. Who maketh destruction blaze upon the mighty, so that destruction cometh upon the fortress.

7. *But* they hate a rebuker in the gate, and one that speaketh uprightly they abhor.

8. Therefore because of your trampling on the needy, and that ye exact burdens of corn from him, though ye build houses of hewn stone, ye shall not dwell in them; though ye plant pleasant vineyards, ye shall not drink of their wine:

9. For I know your transgressions manifold, and your sins mighty, oppressors of the guiltless, receivers of bribe, and that have turned aside the poor in the gate.

10. Therefore he that skilleth to teach in that time is silent, for that time is evil, [*and he saith not,*] Seek good, and not evil, in order that ye may live, and that the ETERNAL, the God of hosts, may be with you, as ye have said.[4]

11. [*Neither saith he*], Hate Evil, and love Good,[5] and establish judgment in the gate,[6] if so perchance the

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[4] Pro אמרתם suspicer legendum אהבתם. Ye have loved. Verum docent *LXX. h. l.* longè aliter se Text. Hebr. legisse.

[5] It is a conjecture, required to give unity of conception to the passage that the words, *Seek Good*, and *Hate Evil*, are the exhortation of the teacher who is silenced. Nothing is more frequent than the omission of the word *saying*, לאמר; as in Psalm cv. 15, is a clear instance.

[6] *The gate*, *i.e.* the place of concourse for judgment, but also for market. Cf. Prov. xxii. 22. Isai. xxv. 21.

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6. Whose providence is in the earth, 7. And they would none of Amos's warnings.

8, 9. Yet God is not blind to justice perverted, and suffering trampled on, but prepares inevitable retribution. 10. Though Amos is silenced, 11. And his preaching suspended by the High Priest calling in the government of the king, so that no one preaches simple truth any more.

ETERNAL, the God of hosts, may be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

12. Therefore thus saith the ETERNAL, the God of hosts, and *our* Lord, In all streets wailing, and in all highways let them say Woe, Woe, and call the husbandman to mourning, and for wailing to the skilled in dirges; and in all vineyards *let* wailing *be,* for I am passing through thy midst, saith the ETERNAL.

13. Woe to them that desire the day of the ETERNAL. For what *end* is this to you?[7] The day of the ETERNAL is darkness, and not light. As when a man fleeth before the lion, and the bear meets him, and he goeth into the house, and leaneth his hand upon the wall, and the serpent bites him. *So* is not the day of the ETERNAL darkness, and not light; and it has gloom and no brightness?

14. I hate, I reject your festivals, and breathe not *incense* in your congregations. Surely, when ye offer me whole burnt-offerings and your oblations, I take no pleasure, and the peace-offering of your fatlings I do not gaze upon.

15. Take away from me the sound of thy chantings, and I will not listen to the melody of thine instruments.

16. But let judgment roll as waters, and righteousness as a perennial stream.

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[7] Is this to you? *Or,* For what profit is the day of the Lord to you? It is darkness, and not light.

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12. So, instead of preaching, wailing: God sends them judgment, passes, dealing doom through their midst.

13. The undecided and half-hearted who wait for Providence, and wish God to reveal himself, will find his revelation more practically terrible than they think.

14, 15, 16. Their sacrifices of blood, and burning incense, move not the Father of our spirits. Their chanted

17. Did you bring nigh to[8] me sacrifices and oblation in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel, and did you *afterwards* bear the tent of your *false* king, and the image of your idols, the star of your god whom you made for yourselves?

18. So do I transport you farther than Damascus, saith the ETERNAL, whose name is the God of hosts.

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[8] *Did you offer, &c.* Or, You brought nigh to me the sacrifices, &c., and *yet* love the tent of your Moloch. Or, Did you bring nigh to me sacrifices, &c.? Nay, you bare rather the tent of your Moloch. *Tent of your king;* or statue of your king, *i.e.* of your Moloch: and so the strictest Hebraists, refusing to take *Siccoth* as *Succoth*, but finding in it the Chaldee *Siccha* (סִכָּא) a rude club-like statue, or Fetich log. Or Siccoth may be imagined a name proper to some idol.—*Image of your idols.* Or *Chiun* your idols, joining Chiun with Siccoth, as two idolatrous titles. Those who adopt this view take Chiun as Arabic or Persian for the planet Saturn, and this is the view of perhaps the highest authorities. So the Syriac, and so Aben Ezra; (but not Jerome's master, as regards the word at least). Granting neither *Siccoth* the truest Hebrew form for Tent, nor *Chiun* for Image, I think the deflection not greater than a dialectic variation in an adopted and archaically consecrated term may account for; and I find ample authorities for on the whole the simplest rendering. Why the LXX. (followed in Acts vii. 43), changed Chiun into Remphan or Ραιφαν, seems rather traceable to a mistake than to an Egyptian word, of which no proof is given. I do not doubt the verse begins interrogatively: "Numquid hostias obtulistis?" The latter half runs in the Vulgate, "Portastis tabernaculum Moloch vestro, et imaginem idolorum vestrorum, sidus dei vestri."—Comp. White's Pocock, H.A., p. 103.

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anthems are no melody to him. Right dealing and fairness please more the Judge of the whole earth.

17, 18. They had pleased God without any sacrifices for forty years in the wilderness: (whether the so-called Mosaic ritual did not then exist, or could not, in the scarcity of the desert, be obeyed:) and they might please him now by righteousness and mercy more than by a pompous worship, which, if done without practical righteousness, Jehovah counts as so much idolatry of Moloch or Saturn.

So far one way of taking this most doubtful passage. But better perhaps: The Israelites had offered sacrifices

V.

1. Woe to the slumberers in Zion, and to the confident in the mount of Samaria, the men of mark of the chief of the nations, and to whom the house of Israel come, [*saying*][1]

[1] LXX. Οὐαὶ τοῖς ἐξουθενοῦσι Σιών . . . . ἀπετρύγησαν ἀρχὰς ἐθνῶν καὶ εἰσῆλθον αὐτοί. It is hard to suppose they had our text before them —*To whom the house*, &c. Vulg. Ingredientes pompaticè domum Israel.

to Jehovah forty years, &c., and yet strangely inconsistent or forgetful, had forsaken him after all for Moloch or Saturn. So will he forsake them to a farther exile than their occasional losses by prisoners of war to Syria involved.

Or thirdly, but not so probably: The Hebrews had not worshipped Jehovah forty years long as they ought, but rather Moloch and Saturn, being a rebellious seed from the beginning: and ever leaving the Eternal Spirit, True Being, God who is Wisdom, Goodness, Truth, for sensuous, and more visibly personal, signs, symbols, stars, the so-called king of heaven, worshipped with blood, &c. This last way suits St. Stephen's quotation in Acts vii. 42, 43, as far as the spirit of his argument goes.

So the passage may mean one of three, if not four, things: (*a*) it imputes, without blaming, neglect of sacrifice of old: (*b*) it acknowledges sacrifice offered, but blames subsequent defection: (*c*) or it imputes as a sin, and as a mode of inherent backsliding, the neglect of sacrifices ordained, and the preference of false, sensual, deities.

If the first is preferred, no certain argument can be drawn from it against the early date of the Mosaic law, though some presumption may; nor if the third is preferred, is the argument very strong in favour of an early date of the law. Jeremiah vii. 22, has been compared: but *need* not mean more than God's preference of mercy to ritual, as in Hosea, vi. 6. On the whole, it is probable,

2. Pass over to Calneh, and see, and go from thence to the great Hamath; or go down to Gath of the Philistines, *and ask,* are they better than these kingdoms, or is their border larger than your border ?[2]

3. [*Woe to them*] that move the evil day afar, and ye that bring the seat of violence nigh: that recline upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat lambs out of the flock, and calves out of the *fattening* stall:

4. Who modulate the mouth of the lute, and like David invent for themselves instruments of song: drinkers with goblets[3] of wine, and who anoint themselves with the prime of unguents, but are not disturbed at the crash of Joseph.

5. Therefore they shall go captive at the head of captives, and the luxury of the recliners[4] shall be removed.

[2] I consider verse 2, as the flattering confidence of the house of Israel addressing its chieftains. The reply of Jehovah comes below, verse 6.

[3] *Goblets,* or bowls, lit. sprinkling censers. *Crash,* or wound.

[4] *Recliners,* the same Hebrew word as *stretch themselves,* in v. 3.

Mosaic traditions were known to Amos, rather than the complete Pentateuch. In any case, St. Stephen's citation of Damascus as Babylon, Acts vii. 43, is an instructive and valuable instance of the adaptation of prophecies by citation or tradition.

1—3. Alas for those who trusting in Samaria's strength, and perhaps in Zion's (or else mocking at the sanctity and teaching of Zion,) fancy the evil day afar off, while their flatterers say, we are as good as Calneh (whether a little town on the Euphrates, or the same as Ctesiphon and Seleucia on the Tigris,) and as good as Hamath, the great Syrian town now tributary to Israel, and as good as Gath, the Philistines' pride.

3—6. Was it for such insolent men as these that shepherds such as Amos, had fed the lambs of their flock?

6. By his own life hath the Lord, the ETERNAL, sworn, is the saying of the ETERNAL, the God of hosts, I abhor the pride of Jacob, and hate his palaces, and deliver *captive* the city, and the fulness thereof.

7. And it shall be, if ten men be left in a single house, they shall die; and as one's kinsman or embalmer[5] take him up to carry forth his bones from the house, he shall say to him that is in the sides of the house, Is there yet any with thee, and it shall be answered, There is an end. And he shall say Hush, for we must not mention the name of the ETERNAL.

8. For behold the ETERNAL commandeth, and he[6] smiteth the great house in shatters, and the small house in cloven pieces.

9. Do horses run upon the rock, or can one plough there with oxen? that ye have turned judgment to hemlock, and the fruits of righteousness to wormwood?[7]

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[5] *Embalmer*, or Burner. The old Hebrews buried, as Abraham at Machpelah. Saul was burnt exceptionally. A great burning is mentioned for Asa (2 Chron. xvi. 14), but whether of his bones, or only of spices and fragrant wood, is doubted. The readings here vary, but preponderate for embalmer, against burner.

[6] He smiteth, *i. e.* Jehovah, or rather some one does it, as the result of Jehovah's command.

[7] See above note on iv. 4 (A.V. v. 7.) where Archbp. Newcome has introduced a reading from this verse.

Hos illi, quod nec bene vertat, mittimus hædos! Virg. Eclog. ix. 6. Rather their pomp and selfish abundance only mark them as the first victims, and their lounging will change to captive step.

6—8. War, as a scourge from God, will search out each detached dwelling, until scarce a corpse remain for burning or embalming, and despair of mercy or fear of foe silence even prayer to the Eternal Helper.

9—11. Barren as soil of rock, is the seed-ground of

10. Ye that rejoice in a thing of nought; that say, Have we not in our strength taken to ourselves horns?

11. Surely I raise up a nation against you, house of Israel, is the saying of the ETERNAL, the God of hosts, and they shall afflict you from the entrance of Hamath to the river of the desert.[8]

12. This vision[9] the Lord, the ETERNAL, shewed me, and I beheld him fashioning locusts, in the beginning of the lattermath's growth; and lo, it was the lattermath after the king's mowings.

13. And it came to pass, as it finished devouring the grass of the land, that I said, Lord, ETERNAL, spare now; how[1] shall Jacob stand, since he is small? The ETERNAL repented over this: It shall not be, said the ETERNAL.

14. This vision[2] the Lord, the ETERNAL, shewed me, and I beheld the Lord, the ETERNAL, calling to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and consumed the part *thereof*.

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[8] *Desert*, or plain. By the river is meant the southern boundary of the Samaritan kingdom, (perhaps the river Arnon), as by Hamath its northern extension. Compare Numbers xxi. 13—15, with Joshua xiii. 5—9; but some make the river here further south than the Arnon; *e.g.* the brook Zered, or *Wadi el Ahseh*, as in Isaiah xiv. 7. (xv. 7.) With this verse ends the Poem.

[9] *This vision*. Hebr. Thus he caused me to see.

[1] *This vision*. Hebr. Thus he called me to see.

[2] *How* shall Jacob stand. Hebr. Who—or by what, &c.

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hope of those who trust to reap safety from wickedness, when from north to south foes over-run them.

12—17. The reason why Amos expects such foes, lies partly in his perception of sinfulness ripe for suffering; partly his foreboding trust in an unseen Judge; partly signs which strike his mind, through the sight of locusts, fire, and wall of downright depth, on which last his imagination paints the Avenger, not now as it were an

15. And I said, Lord, ETERNAL, pray, cease; how shall Jacob stand, since he is small? The ETERNAL repented upon this: Neither shall this be, said the Lord, the ETERNAL.

16. This vision he shewed me; and I beheld the Lord standing upon a downright wall, with a plumb-line in his hand: and the ETERNAL said to me, What seest thou, Amos? and I said, A plumb-line.[3]

17. Then the Lord said, Behold me setting a plumb-line down the midst of my people Israel; I will not again pass by him any more, but the high places of Isaac *shall* be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel wasted, and I am risen against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.

VI.

1. Then Amaziah, priest of the House of El, (Bethel) sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is not able to endure all his sayings: for thus saith Amos, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel go utterly exiled from off his soil.

2. And Amaziah said to Amos, Seer, Go, flee for

[3] This vision. Hebr. Thus he made see.

angel, but as Providence in person, the Creator and Destroyer, drawing the unseen sword, so prompting the sword of war, or of conspiracy. So the prayer of the Prophet's interceding heart sinks in despair.

1—2. The high-priest, or bishop, at Bethel, if he does not believe these forebodings of zeal, sees what awkward agitation they may breed in men's minds; and warns the king and government, while he advises Amos to go back to his friends, where he may foretell what he likes.

thyself into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and there thou mayest play the prophet; but come not to Bethel again any more to play the prophet; for it is the king's sanctuary, and the church[4] of the kingdom.

3. Then answered Amos and said to Amaziah, No prophet was I, neither prophet's son was I, but I was a herdsman and a gatherer of wild figs,[5] and the ETERNAL took me from following the flock, and the ETERNAL said to me, Go, be thou a prophet to my people Israel.

4. And now hear the word of the ETERNAL: Thou sayest, Prophesy not, neither distil *knowledge* to the house of Isaac; therefore thus saith the ETERNAL, Thy wife shall be for hire in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be portioned by a line, and thou shalt die upon a polluted soil,[6] and Israel shall go utterly into exile from off his soil.

5. This vision[7] the Lord, the ETERNAL, shewed me, and I beheld a basket of summer *fruit;* and he said, What seest thou, Amos? and I said, A basket of summer fruit.

6. Then the ETERNAL said unto me, The *supreme* end

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[4] *Church,* or Court. Hebr. Baith, House.

[5] *Gathering,* or pricking *wild figs* or mulberries.

[6] *Polluted,* or unhallowed soil. Either the land of Israel desecrated, or some other than the Holy Land.

[7] *This vision.* Hebr. Thus he made me see.—*Summer fruit.* Hebr. Summer.

3—4. The Prophet, like a Puritan or early Quaker, or the sterner Friars of the 12th century, answers wrathfully; and denounces on his mitred opponent calamities, of which we have no record whether they came to pass; or whether God, whose thought is larger than our thought, over-ruled the too fervid zeal. We know that Jeroboam died in peace, though Amos, if he is reported truly by Amaziah, meant differently.

5—7. Amos proceeds to relate the signs of calamity

is come upon my people Israel: I will not again pass by him any more, but the chantings[8] of the Temple shall become howlings in that day, is the saying of the Lord, the ETERNAL; *and* many the carcase in every spot; cast them forth to burial,[9] and hush.

7. Hear this, ye that swallow[1] up the poor, and are for making the needy[2] fail out of the land, saying, When will the moon feast be over, that we may sell corn, and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat; for us to make the measure small, and the price great, and to twist the deceitful balances; to buy for silver the helpless, and the poor for a pair of shoes, and that we may sell the windfall[3] of the wheat?

8. The ETERNAL hath sworn by the pride of Jacob, Never will I forget all *these* their works. Doth not for this our land quake, and every dweller in it mourn, and it has swollen, like a flood, all of it, and has been tossed *to and fro* and subsided[4] like the flood of Egypt.

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[8] *Chantings of the Temple*, or the songs of the Palace. The two renderings are equally defensible. I have preferred finding a reference to the sanctuary at Bethel, which wrought so vividly on the Prophet. See iv. 15.

[9] *Cast them forth to burial, and hush.* Or, (punctis non mutatis) "he that casteth them forth to burial is silent."

[1] *Swallow up.* Or, greedily pant over the poor. Vulg. Qui conteritis pauperem.

[2] *The needy fail.* Lit. and cause to cease the needy of the land. Nisi forte pro לַשְּׁבִית legendum sit לַשְּׁבוּת in servitium absorbentes.

[3] Windfall; rather the fallen, or refuse.

[4] *Subsided*, i.e. נִשְׁקָעָה, which is the marginal correction or *Keri*. The Hebrew text gives נִשְׁקָה *watered*, which probably was written by some scribe who thought of the flood of the Nile, and did not notice that the flood was only a comparison for the land heaving with earthquake.

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which had struck his roused fancy, and records the consequent warnings to people in Bethel or Samaria, though here painted with the fiery glow of a mind brooding on its memories.

8. He records the petty grasping and greed which he

9. And it shall be in that day, is the saying of the Lord, the ETERNAL, that I will make the sun go down at noon, and throw darkness on the earth in bright day;[5] and I will turn your feasts into mourning, and your songs into death-wails, and bring up sackcloth on all loins, and baldness on every head, and make the city[6] as a *place of* mourning for an only child, and her last end as a bitter day.

10. Behold days coming, is the saying of the Lord, the ETERNAL, when I send a hunger in the land; not a hunger for bread, and not a thirst for water, but for hearing the words of the ETERNAL; and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east they shall run about to seek the word of the ETERNAL, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair maidens and the choice youth faint for thirst.

[5] *Bright day.* Hebr. Day of light.
[6] *Make the city.* Hebr. Make her.

had seen, 8. and suggests that the earthquake which followed his expulsion from Bethel is a sign of God's displeasure.

When the day of doom comes, light will be darkness to the perishing; and feasts become mourning as for a darling child. These striking images of a kingdom's downfall, the deepest form of the universal creed of poetry that Nature suffers in man's suffering, suggest to the Gospels and to the Apocalypse the strong figures of desolating war, in the fall of Jerusalem, when the powers of Heaven were shaken, and the day of the Lord came in gloom.

10, 11. As in our sorrow we all turn to God, so those who have cast out the Prophet will one day sigh for his words; and a hunger for guidance, a thirst for comfort,

11. They who swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, As thy god liveth, O Dan, and who say, As the way of Beersheba liveth,[7] even they are fallen, and shall not rise again.

VII.

1. I saw the Lord standing upon the altar, and he said, Smite the coronal,[8] and let the doorposts tremble; and wound them upon the head all of them; and the uttermost of them will I slay with the sword; there shall not flee for them a flier, nor escape for them one that escapeth.

2. If they dig into the hollow place,[9] *even* from thence shall my hand take them; and if they mount up into the heavens, from thence will I bring them down,

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[7] As the way of Beersheba liveth. Or, as thy way liveth, Beersheba—for I doubt not the pronominal affix has dropt out, though whether the word prefixed to it was *Way* in the sense of Worship, or some word meaning Deity, may be doubted.

[8] *Coronal*, or chapiter—the lintel of the door-post.

[9] *Hollow place*. Hebr. שְׁאוֹל. Gr. Κοῖλος. Eng. Hollow, hell, &c. Either the grave, but not excluding existence; or hell, but never including torment. Hence perhaps best translated *the underworld*, so far as its variations can be arranged under one typical sense. The old etymology of שְׁאוֹל to ask, (as if greedy,) is a most painful Rabbinism.

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will sicken those who now think signs and symbols can work the salvation of the living God.

1. Whether the Prophet's mind acquired more certainty in its brooding, or whether signs of Pul's approach, or at least of a great power growing up in Assyria, reached him, he comes to end with a splendid mental vision of Jehovah consummating Samaria's fall. As in Psalm lxviii. the God of battles is made to whiten the field with bones, and bring the flying foe back to the slaughter even from the Western sea; so from heaven above, or the underworld beneath, from the pastures of mount Carmel in the North,

3. And if they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, from thence I will search them out and take them, and if they are hidden from my eyes in the bottom of the sea, from thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them,

4. And if they go into slavery before their enemies, from thence I will command the sword, and it shall slay them, and I will set my eyes upon them for evil, and not for good :

5. Yea the Lord, the ETERNAL one of Hosts, who touches the earth and it sinks,[1] so that all the dwellers therein mourn (and it mounts like a flood, all of it, and subsides like the flood of Egypt,) *even* he who builds his chambers in the heavens, and hath established his arch upon earth, who calls to the waters of the sea, and pours them upon the face of the land, whose name is the ETERNAL;

6. Are ye not as sons of the Ethiopians to me, sons

[1] See above, Note on vi. 8. (A. V. viii. 8.) Probably the allusion is to the earthquake mentioned at the head of chapter I.

or from deep of sea to the West, the Avenger will give the fugitive to the sword.

3. Whether, in verse 3, the sea-serpent, or famous leviathan of Ocean, as distinct from that of the Nile, appears, or whether it is a mere figure, may be doubted.

4. If against their destiny they contrive to escape, slavery is little comfort.

5. Let those who resist God, think what he is ; and remember the earthquake which made their land rock like water, or gaze on heaven's vault and ocean's flood.

6. If they trust their election and predestination to prosperity as God's Church and People, He who is the God

of Israel ? is the saying of the ETERNAL. Brought I not up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor,[2] and the Aramite from Kir ? [or the city *of old ?*]

7. Behold the eyes of the Lord, the ETERNAL, are upon the sinful kingdom, so that I destroy it from off the face of the earth, save only that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

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[2] *Caphtor.* Cappadocia, said Jerome, and, as Bochart shews, all the ancients, guided perhaps by the sound of the name. Crete or Cyprus, say most moderns, Michaelis, Calmet, &c. For it is now assumed upon evidence, which does not, I confess, appear to me overwhelming, that the Philistines were an European race; and that their kindred played in Palestine, under the names of Cherethites, Pelethites, &c. a part analogous to that of the Greek mercenaries under Psammetichus. The few who place Caphtor in Egypt, seem guided by the Coptic original for the Greek name Egypt (comp. Κόπτος, Αἴγυπτος) but fail to explain why the Hebrew name *Mitsraim* gives place only in this relation to the name Caphtor. Nor are Philistine manners and affinities apparently Egyptian, but rather Arabian, though urban. Yet, since Genesis x. 13, 14, deduces Philistines and Caphtorites from Mitsraim, and Herodotus (ii. 128) found an Egyptian tradition of the shepherd Philition building the Pyramids, we may not unreasonably connect the Philistines with the Shepherd Kings, or some one of the Asiatic dynasties which intruded into Egypt. This theory would best reconcile apparently Semitic deities, language, manners, with the character of lordly aliens. The old geographers in such things go often far astray, as *e. g.* Jerome and others, when they made *Kir*, Cyrene. Considering that *Kir*, as a local name, belongs to a river and region on the Caspian, to which the Damascenes went (see 2 Kings xvi. 9), or to one somewhat south, possibly the Kurd country (Isaiah xix. 6) and not being able to make any such region the mother country of the Syrians, I would almost treat *Kir* as the Hebrew word for *City* (as עִיר appears in *Ur* of the Chaldees) and conceive it to be the traditional description among the Syrians of their mother city. Aram is the true name for Syria.

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of all the spirits of all flesh, has blessed other migrations as well as those of the Hebrews, and loves Gentile as well as Jew (or Heathen as well as Christian).

7. So God, who suffered the realm to grow by policy, will suffer it to fall by wickedness; and if he does

8. For behold, I give command, and I shake the house of Israel in all nations, as when is shaken in a sieve, and falleth not a pebble[3] to the earth: *but* by the sword shall die all the sinners of my people, who say the end shall not draw nigh, nor overtake where we are.

9. In that day I will raise up the tent of David that is fallen, and fence round both their breaches, and his ruins I will raise up, and build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations over which my name is called, is the saying of the ETERNAL who does this.

10. Behold days are coming, is the saying of the ETERNAL, when the ploughman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that

[3] *Pebble*, or grain. *Shaken*, or sifted.

not obliterate every Israelite, he will let the refuse be shaken out, and only the solid remnant of good people survive.

8. In this verse, more than anywhere else in the Old Testament, appears some reason for the common opinion that the dispersion of the Jews will be followed by a providential and predicted restoration. But the more closely the passage is connected with the context, the more it proves that Amos was thinking only of survivors from an early destruction by the Assyrians, or others, and probably of a restoration of the Solomonian, or Judaic dynasty to the throne of Ephraim, so long usurped by the followers of Jeroboam.

9, 10. The Hebrew affix to *breaches*, (translated by me *both their* breaches), may mean the two re-united realms, or may as probably be an error in the text, which is often

draweth forth seed; and the mountains shall drop new wine, and all the hills flow fatness; when I will turn again the captivity of my people Israel, and they build the cities that had been desolate, and dwell there; when they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof, and dress gardens and eat the fruit of them; when I will plant them upon their soil, and they shall no more be uprooted from off their soil which I have given them, saith the ETERNAL THY GOD.

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faulty, while the slip of the scribe becomes a mystery. But my translation gives the Hebrew as it stands, unless the reader is warned otherwise.

The book closes with a humane relenting of the sterner tone, and with aspiration for better days; the imagery being partly characteristic of Amos, and partly of the type common to the schools of the Prophets, but moulded to some extent upon Joel. See Joel iv. 19 (A. V. iii. 18). The reference to Edom in both is very significant.

ON SOME VARIATIONS IN THE VERSIONS.

With a few strikingly difficult exceptions, Amos, as a whole, has presented little room for doubt as to his meaning. The Septuagint has some curious variations. In i. 9, 11, Edom's "destroying his compassions" becomes ἐλυμήνατο μητέρα ἐπὶ γῆς, and the verse proceeds, ἥρπασεν εἰς μαρτύριον φρίκην αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὸ ὅρμημα αὐτοῦ ἐφύλαξεν εἰς νῖκος; the last of which clauses gives the sense of the Hebrew, but the penultimate one seems impossible to reconcile with it. In ii. 12, 13 (A. V. ii. 16.) ὁ κραταιὸς οὐ μὴ ἑυρήσει τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ ἐν δυναστείαις· ὁ γυμνὸς διώξεται

ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ. These words have such a degree of resemblance to the Hebrew as shews the translator to have had our text, but to have rudely translated it. In iii. 4 (A. V. iii. 12) the words "in the corner of a bed, and in the coverlet of a couch," become κατέναντι τῆς φυλῆς καὶ ἐν Δαμασκῷ, where the three latter words bear an intelligible relation to the Hebrew, but the three former can be but conjecturally explained by turning בְּפְאַת מִטָּה into לִפְנֵי מַטֶּה or something of the kind. I am afraid of suggesting that ἱερεῖς represents the Hebrew עָרֵשׂ. Passing on to iii. 9, (A. V. iv. 2,) we find τοὺς μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰς λέβητας ὑποκαιομένους ἐμβαλοῦσιν ἔμπυροι λοιμοί. Here it is easy to see that λέβητας, cauldrons, arose out of סִירוֹת naturally: but whence the fiery pestilences came, ἔμπυροι λ. is not easy to divine. A few verses lower we find a remarkable, and almost comical specimen of confusion of tenses. Where the Hebrew says, "I gave you cleanness of teeth. . . and "I restrained the rain . . . and rained on one city . . . and "two and three cities wandered," all of which are manifestly historical tenses, iii. 13—15, (A. V. iv. 6—8,) the Greek translators with little reason convert them into predictive futures. I say with little reason, because the Hebraic manner of subordinating the conjunctive tenses in a sentence to the time of the preceding verb, lends itself to some indefiniteness of usage, and leaves room for some variety of opinion; but the leading tenses, or main clauses, in this passage hardly admit of doubt, but such as arises from neglect of grammar. For even if any one should urge the preceding "Come to Bethel and transgress," (בֹּאוּ בֵית־אֵל) as implying in the imperative form a future time, which may convert the subsequent præterites into futures, the LXX. translators have deprived themselves of this answer by making the "*Come to Bethel*" a past: Εἰσήλθατε εἰς B. καὶ ἠσεβήσατε, καὶ ἠνέγκατε θυσίας, (καὶ ἀνέγνωσαν ἔξω νόμου, κ. τ. λ. where a whole sentence is interpolated with no Hebrew to correspond to it,) yet they nevertheless proceed Καὶ ἐγὼ δώσω ὑμῖν γομφιασμὸν

ὀδόντων, κ. τ. λ. They then relent sufficiently to throw in, Καὶ ἐγὼ ἀνέσχον, *And I restrained,* but returning to the error of which they are enamoured, they proceed, Καὶ βρέξω ἐπὶ πόλιν μίαν . . . Καὶ συναθροισθήσονται δύο καὶ τρεῖς πόλεις, κ. τ. λ. If this remarkable passage shews how easily prediction may be manufactured out of misunderstanding, and throws light on the origin of many popular theories, we cannot wonder elsewhere to find the future stript of the imperative sense which Hebrew idiom had given it, and made nakedly predictive. Thus, in iv. 16, (A. V. v. 24,) where the Prophet enjoins, that, in the place of chanting and instruments, justice and right should roll a harmony dearer to God, the LXX. translators say Καὶ κυλισθήσεται ὡς ὕδωρ κρίμα, κ. τ. λ., which is one of a thousand instances in which the delicacy of the original is perverted. I do not remark these things with a view of denying value to the Septuagint, or with a wish to reject its aid when it may be inherently probable, or other texts doubtful; for it cannot be always wrong, and its variations may be sometimes due to a variety in the Hebrew text on which it was based: although oftener, I am convinced, they are due to ignorance: and for the most part ignorance of the kind which semi-literate Jews having some tradition of their own tongue, but profoundly unphilological, shew even in our age, and might shew more in the age of the Ptolemies. Thus, even though the Greek may help to correct occasionally the Latin Vulgate or the Authorised English, it is greatly inferior, as a whole, to either of them. It must probably have been inferior also to the version of Symmachus; and in whatever measure it may have embodied older traditions of the Synagogue, or prompted early Christian interpretations, those traditions and interpretations are in the same degree likely to be erroneous. I have noticed on iii. 20, the creation of the Messiah, (τὸν Χριστὸν αὐτοῦ) out of the Hebrew, מַה־שִּׂחוֹ "what is his thought."

Among instances of failure in catching delicacy of idiom, may be noticed iii. 18, (A. V. iv. 11.) *Κατέστρεψα ὑμᾶς*, I overthrew you, for חָפַכְתִּי בָכֶם I overthrew some amongst you. This error is as if in Greek we should construe the partitive genitive as an accusative. It is a similar blemish to translate כִּימֵי עוֹלָם as in the days of old, vii. 9, (A. V. ix. 12,) by a Greek nominative *κάθως αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ αἰῶνος*, if even the idea be not altogether changed. The frequent translation of the Hebrew לָנֶצַח for ever, by the Greek *εἰς νῖκος*, is the work of one who knew Hebrew better than Greek, but neither of them well.

Leaving censoriousness, I will note but a few more things curious. In iv. 5, (A. V. v. 8), the Seven Stars and Orion (lit. Group and Giant,) become in Greek *Ὁ ποιῶν πάντα καὶ μετασκευάζων*, as if the translator despaired of the words: and the verse before, "Ye that turn judgment to wormwood," becomes *Ὁ ποιῶν εἰς ὕψος κρίμα, καὶ δικαιοσύνην εἰς γῆν ἔθηκεν.* In verse 6, lower down, *Ὁ διαιρῶν συντριμμὸν ἐπὶ ἰσχὺν*, "He that raiseth affliction against might," is more defensible, though still erroneous. Five verses lower, or in iv. 10, the Greek *μεμισήκαμεν τὰ πονηρὰ* fairly implies that the Hebrew text was different. Near the end of the chapter we have *ἀνελάβετε τὴν σκηνὴν τοῦ Μολόχ, καὶ το ἄστρον τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῶν Ραιφὰν, τοὺς τύπους αὐτῶν*, where the order of the clauses is changed, but otherwise, the version would be correct enough, if only *Ραιφάν* could be proved an Egyptian word, and not a mistake for Chiun.

In c. v. 2, the Greek leaves the great Hamath as *Ἐματραββά*. Wine out of bowls, v. 4, becomes fine-strained wine, *τὸν διυλισμένον οἶνον*, probably by mistake. The recliners, sprawling on couches, are not badly given, *οἱ κατασπαταλῶντες*. In verse 9, the ploughing with oxen is turned into *εἰ παρασιωπήσονται ἐν θηλείαις*, which may come of different text, or of the vagary of a Rabbinical

fancy. The river of the desert, v. 11, is represented as the torrent of the West, *χειμάῤῥου τῶν δυσμῶν.*

In vii. 1, (A. V. ix. 1,) the *Caphtor,* chapiter, or crowning-piece of the door, becomes with the LXX. *τὸ ἱλαστήριον,* evidently from their confusing it with the distinct Hebrew words, Caphar, Caphoreth, in which, as in the English *cover,* the sense of atonement as forgiveness is conveyed. Whereas *Caphtor* has a different origin and sense.

In c. vii. 6, (A. V. ix. 7,) for "the Philistines out of Caphtor and the Syrians out of Kir," the Greek has *τοὺς ἀλλοφύλους ἐκ Καππαδοκίας, καὶ τοὺς Σύρους ἐκ βόθρου*— the last word apparently an etymological translation of the root קוּר, implying ignorance of the local name. In v. 8, (A. V. 9,) צְרוֹר is translated *σύντριμμα,* a fragment.

The reader will, I trust, pardon so much dissertation upon renderings, most of them too improbable to be placed in the margin, in consideration of the great importance of the question as to the accuracy of the Septuagint. However much the Fathers ascribed a Divine infallibility to this version of the Old Testament, as to the books of the Apocrypha, (both Origen and Augustine arguing the unlikelihood that God should inspire mere Hebrew Scriptures and not much more inspire a version for the Christian Church,) we are happily in the Church of England bound neither by such a tradition, nor by its kindred interpretations, which supply Christianity with evidences for the simple, but stumbling-blocks for the educated. Trusting to have here shewn, that while the version is worthy of study as an historical monument, it has no claim to stand against Hebrew authority, I shall only on occasions revert to the subject.

The Vulgate Latin contains in c. i. 4, three mistakes, "Dispersam habitatorem de campo Idoli, (for Aven) et "tenentem sceptrum de domo Voluptatis (for Eden) et "transferetur populus S. Cyrenen"—but none of them without reason, nor except Cyrene, quite indefensible. In i. 14, "their king" is left untranslated, Melchom. In iii. 9,

(A. V. iv. 2,) for "ye shall be taken away with sharp prongs," &c. the Latin runs "levabunt vos in contis et reliquias "vestras in ollis ferventibus," where the Hebrew for fishing דּוּגָה is lost sight of. In the preceding verse, "cows of Basan" is rightly given Vaccæ pingues. In the passage, iii. 13—18, (A. V. iv. 6—11,) the Latin rightly restores its historical character, which the Greek had sacrificed, and gives correctly the "turning judgment into wormwood" of iv. 4, which the Greek had strangely metamorphosed; but it omits, as the Greek omitted, to represent the imperative sense of יִגַּל in iv. 16, (A. V. v. 24,) and mistaking probably the Hebrew גלל for גלה, it runs, "*Revelabitur* quasi aqua judicium;" but this, though an error, is not indefensible.

In c. v. 1, (A. V. vi. 1,) the "ingredientes pompaticè domum Israel" helps to suggest the true meaning of the second verse, as the pompous boast of Samaritan flatterers, and not as the prophetic utterance, with which it would have nothing in common. In v. 13—15, (A. V. vii. 2—5,) the Latin, Quis suscitabit Jacob, suggests what probably would be the true reading מִי יָקִים for מִי יָקוּם. In vi. 8, (A. V. viii. 8,) the future tenses exemplify the too common fault of the Old Versions, making prediction, "com- "movebitur terra, et lugebit habitator ejus," where the Prophet was describing an earthquake he had witnessed, and connecting it with the wickedness of the wealthy.

In vii. 1, (A. V. ix. 1,) for "wound them on the head," the Latin has "avaritia enim in capite omnium"—taking בצע by a possible, but highly improbable, rendering for Booty. In vii. 5, (A. V. iv. 5,) the Latin "*Qui tangit ter-* "*ram—et tabescet,*" &c. fails to give the linked correspondence of the Hebrew, but turns the meaning, "*Who if he but touch the earth—it melteth,*" into some thing indistinct enough to seem a prediction. Yet although in this, and many such passages (as *e.g.* Isaiah xix. (A. V. xxii.) 7, 9, 12,) Jerome has missed the inferential sense of the Hebrew

conjunction, I would not be understood as if in every passage where I have preferred such inferential sense, it was the only one admissible, but readily acknowledge a narrative future, or a predictive tense, to be a possible construction in some cases where I have not preferred it. Hebrew scholars in general will allow that in different passages, where such constructions are disputed, there are probabilities varying in almost infinite degrees.

In vii. 6, (A. V. ix. 7,) "Israel ascendere feci de terrâ Ægypti, et Palæstinos de Cappadociâ, et Syros de Cyrene."

INTRODUCTION TO OBADIAH.

Such inbred characteristics as the Old Testament would form in the true Jew, a devout faith in God and a stern patriotism, both tending to degenerate into a vindictive zeal, are stamped on the twenty verses of Obadiah. Beyond this, we have no certainty of his life or period, barely of his name, since *Ovad-Jah,* Obediens Jehovæ, (British Ufudh i'r Iah), Jehovah's-worshipper, may suit any one of the thousand little known seers, who, in the neighbourhood of some sanctuary, or in the Prophets' schools, as afterwards kindred spirits in the better monasteries, devoted their lives to an idea of thought or adoration, and breathed themselves in a psalm, a prophecy, or a hymn. Hence, although the language, as a whole, implies antiquity, it is not wonderful that the clear mention of a day of siege and calamity as something past should have made good critics imagine the reign of Nebuchadnezzar the date of its composition. Thus Archbishop Newcome, with the fullest reason, says, "I suppose he prophesied between "the taking of Jerusalem, B.C. 587, and the destruction of "Edom by Nebuchadnezzar, which latter event probably "took place a very few years after the former. Ussher "places the destruction of Jerusalem 588 B.C., and the "siege of Tyre 585 B.C. This siege lasted thirteen years, "in which interval Ussher says that the Sidonians, Moab-"ites, Ammonites, and Idumæans seem to have been "subdued by the Babylonians." (Joseph. Antiq. x. 9, 7.)

It is not a valid answer to this sensible view of the Archbishop, to remark that the English version gives as

reproofs of the past ("Thou shouldest not have looked, neither have rejoiced," &c. vv. 12—13) what in Hebrew are prohibitions of the future. For the prohibition is so framed, that it pre-supposes the offence. Rather an additional argument for Newcome's view, if not for a still later date, may be drawn from the last three verses, which imply extension and distribution of a land recovered after it had been lost. And if the high authorities are right, who follow De Sacy in explaining, with the aid of a cuneiform inscription, *Sepharad* as Sardis, considering that Josephus (Antiq. xii. 3, 4) mentions a settlement of Jews in Lydia by Antiochus about B.C. 200, there will appear reason in the view, that the three last verses of the book are as late as the Asmonean Princes, and the deliverers on Mount Sion may refer to the forcible conversion of the Edomites to Judaism by John Hyrcanus (Jos. Antiq. xiii. ix. 1, with Whiston's note). Even without pressing this argument, or separating these three verses from the earlier portion, we may find in Psalm cxxxvii., "Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites Jerusalem's day;" and in Jeremiah xlix., where the prophecy is almost reproduced, abundant justification of the many critics who make the poem a complaint of Edom's malice at the time of the exile, and a cry for retribution upon him. Let the reader also compare the xxvth and xxxvth chapters of Ezekiel; and for the boundaries, Ez. xlvii. 13—21.

On the other hand, it should be considered, that this poem contains no mention of Assyrian or Babylonian, nor allusion to them (unless as *strangers* in v. 11), and the phrases "*Jacob and Joseph*," may seem to imply the existence of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes. And as the poem joins on to Amos like a continuation of the woe to Edom, so whoever arranged the Hebrew canon may have had reasons, not infallible, but worth attention, for the order

in which the books are given. Thus, after the dignity of the four greater Prophets had been consulted, Hosea may have been placed first, as the earliest of whom the arranging scribes knew any history; Joel, less known, but evidently ancient, seemed to deserve the second place: Amos is placed chronologically enough, especially if we imagine a little interval between his preaching and his writing. The book ascribed to Jonah is placed in the age of its supposed author. Now, if Obadiah lived about the same time, he may have seen Edomite hangers-on of the army of Joash revenging their recent defeat under Amaziah, and entering Jerusalem with mockery, when its wall was broken down four hundred cubits (2 Kings xiv. 13—16). This retaliation from the recently-conquered would be exceedingly provoking. Again, if we look back to the reign of Jehoshaphat, we read of an expedition against Judah, in which Edomites leagued with Moabites were destroyed by the "men of their own covenant" (2 Chron. xx. 23): and this, or a similar though unrecorded event, may have suggested verse 7. Remembering an Obadiah among the instruments of Jehoshaphat's reform (2 Chron. xvii. 7), one might well think him the most likely of all recorded of that name to be the author of our poem, and so be led to an earlier date. Such conflicting phenomena of the case have led the sagacious Ewald to imagine an older writing re-cast at the time of the Exile. This supposition would account for the mention of *strangers*, v. 11, and the picture of utter downfall, v. 16; nor is it rendered improbable by anything we know of the custody of the sacred writings. I cannot think its signs so demonstrative, but that it remains more natural to consider the poem as a single whole, with only a probable addition of three verses at the end. Our prophecy then may be deemed a sharp denunciation by some devout patriot, written between the

reigns of Jehoshaphat and Uzziah, B.C. 900 to 800, even if edited after the exile with fresh remembrance of Edomite feud, and having possibly a verse of Asmonean date.

It might help us, if we had a more certain interpretation of the singular word *Sepharad*, v. 20. The Septuagint in despair made it Ephratha, Nescio cur—remarks Jerome; possibly, as has been guessed, meaning Sephratha. Jerome's Hebrew tutor made it the *Bosporus*, and connected it with Hadrian's carrying off the Jews; a painfully characteristic instance of Rabbinism led by literalisation, and creating prediction by misunderstanding. Some have thought of Sippara in Mesopotamia, which is Sepharvaim. Modern Jews, finding the word Chaldaised by euphonic vowels at its commencement and its end, imagine *Espamia* or Syriac Espania (*quasi* Esphardia) to mean Spain; whence the Spanish Jews are called *Sephardim*. (Comp. Bochart, Geogr. pp. 82, 314. Rosenmüller in h. l.)

And since Sepharad was to be Spain, some made Sarepta France. These things are chiefly valuable, as shewing the germination of errors.

Three interpretations may be treated as serious.

(1.) Since the other names in the passage belong all to Palestine, or its borders, and since Sarepta is given as the limit of extension for the northern frontier, it is probable that the corresponding Sepharad is some place which should be the limit of extension southwards; either one not otherwise known, but probably in Edom; or of which the name is slightly altered, as *e.g.* Saphar, a town in Arabia, which fulfils some of the conditions. This hypothesis, though incomplete, suits the passage best, especially the parallelism; though not the order of the words.

(2.) Again, since inscriptions, reported by the traveller Niebuhr, interpreted by Burnouf and Lassen, and applied to this passage by De Sacy, give Sepharad as a Persian

territory, thought to have been Sardis, and since Jews got to Lydia under Antiochus, we may understand Sardis as the place meant. (Comp. Gesenius *in v.*) High authorities favour this, but it implies the whole passage to be a late addition, and it disturbs the parallelism, since the preceding *Canaan* was not a place of captivity, but an object of occupation.

Thirdly, Sepharad may not be a local name, but a term of dispersion, answering to the Greek διασπορά, whether formed from Jerome's Assyrian word *sapharad*, a boundary, (if there were such), or compounded out of the Hebrew סוף and פרד, or lastly a Hebrew root Latinised by assimilation to the word SePaRaTe, which may have been applied to themselves by the Western Jews, from B. C. 200 to B. C. 100. This hypothesis has least philological authority, and suits the parallelism as little as the second did; but it falls in best with the subsequent tradition of the word, which, however, may have been distorted from some name in this text as it originally stood.

No one of these explanations is destitute of recommendation, or free from objection.

In the same passage, v. 20, the words הַחֵל־הַזֶּה are in any way difficult, whether pointed as a Hiphil præt. or infinitive, to suit the Greek τῆς μετοικεσίας ἡ ἀρχή (which has also Rabbinical authority, and I suspect is right), or whether treated as a variation of חֵיל a host, therefore a crowd, which approaches the Latin "transmigratio exercitus ei." Without venturing to alter the text, I will just suggest that the second אשר before בספרד may have dropt out of its place originally before החל, and that the first אשר before כנענים is (as Ewald first saw) a misreading for ארץ land, or ערי cities. My mistrust of the Septuagint does not prevent me from thinking that it preserves best the leading idea in this passage, although its *Ephratha* can neither be adopted, nor made, as by Jerome, even

while he does not adopt it, a prediction of Gospel fruitfulness: "nulli dubium est (?) quin Christi intelligatur fides!"

The punctuation of Obadiah has a doubtfulness which may pass among signs of antiquity. In vv. 9, 10, ancient and modern versions have joined מִקָּטֶל to the second verse, in the sense of "propter interfectionem," "for killing;" but the Hebrew retains it in the first verse, requiring thereby strange explanations. In vv. 6, 7, I seem alone in joining the words עַד־הַגְּבוּל to the preceding sentence; but it is possible that the old interpreters understood it so, and the sense and rhythm require it. I suspect that in many passages, where from habit we little notice it, the true Hebrew rhythm would lead us to discard the Masoretic punctuation. A more questionable instance may be suggested in vv. 7, 8, where the words, "There is no understanding in him," may be a speech of the scornful confederates upbraiding Edom, but more probably begin the new sentence, and introduce the idea of Jehovah's cutting off from Edom the shrewd sayers of proverbs, such as the friends of Job and others, whose maxims of experience and cunning pass in the East for wisdom.

In the hands of Jerome, Edom becomes Heresy. "Vide "Marcionem et Valentinum, et omnes hæreticos," on verse 6; and on verse 11, "Juxta est, O Hæretice, dies domini, "sicut fecisti contra ecclesiasticos, convertetur in caput "tuum." From other writers, whose mysticism is not checked as Jerome's was by genuine Hebrew teaching, such interpretations might be multiplied to any extent, and might convey a good moral in a bad interpretation. Thus they of the plain, or the flat (Sephelah) may mean the humble in heart. But the historical investigator of Obadiah's meaning sees a real Edom, and a real passion against it, such as the old clansmanship of the English and Scottish borders in its fiercer moods engendered, and such as

still betrays itself in Teutonic jealousies of the quicker Gallic wit, or lurks in the dislike of the rural English to the name of foreigner. Those who think such antipathies natural in different races, should observe that they are never so bitter as between branches of the same ethnological stem, as was the case with Jews and Edomites, and has at times seemed with Germans and Scandinavians.

A poem so patriotic seemed to justify the retention of the Hebrew word *Jahveh*, in its usual form Jehovah. In cases where it is connected with a nobler and more enduring spirit, it deserves to be rendered the Eternal; for such is the profound idea which it once conveyed of God, as the only True Being. By retaining Jehovah always, one would merge that true and metaphysical idea of Deity in the mere national God of the Hebrews: yet by never giving Jehovah one would conceal the national conceptions which accompanied, and sometimes encumbered, the deeper idea. Again, our word LORD, though familiarly sacred, would suit equally well Baal, Adonai, Adonis, and expresses a mere supremacy of power, far unlike the claim of right by which the true God merits our obedience.

OBADIAH.

THE VISION OF OVÁD-YAH.—THUS SAITH THE LORD JEHOVAH TO EDOM.

1. We have heard a rumour from Jehovah, and round among the nations is sent a message, rouse,[1] and let us rise against her to battle.

2. Behold, I have made thee small among the nations: thou art despised exceedingly.

3. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, dweller in the clefts of the rock; in the height of his abode he saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to earth?

4. Though thou mountest high as the eagle, and though

[1] *Rouse*, Hebr. Arise. 2. "I have made thee small" is improperly applied by Jerome to the Prophet, instead of to Edom. 3. *Mountest high*, lit. makest high.

Whether rumours were abroad that Joash after taking Jerusalem, or Nebuchadnezzar after destroying it (1 Kings xiv. 13, and 2 Kings xxv.) was turning victorious arms against Edom, or whether Arabian or Moabite had broken a temporary league with kindred marauders, (comp. 2 Chron. xx. 23, and xxviii. 17, 18), or whether sorrowful indignation joined with faith in God made some devout patriot forebode, as he desired, calamity upon Mount Seir, either the description of an invasion, or possibly its immediate anticipation, takes outward form as an audible threat from the Judge of the whole earth.

1—8. Not as thieves taking their fill, and then sparing,

thou settest thy nest amongst the stars, from thence will I bring thee down, is the saying of Jehovah.

5. If thieves came to thee, if robbers of the night, how hadst thou *then* been cut off! *yet* would they not have stolen their fill? if grape-gatherers came to thee, would not they have spared the tender bud?

6. How are the *recesses*[2] of Esau searched; his lurking-places are sought out; *even* to the boundary have they cast thee forth.

7. All thy confederates deceived thee: the men of thy peace were strong against thee; *for* thy bread they set under thee a wound.[3]

8. There is no understanding in him: shall it not be in that day, is the saying of Jehovah, that I destroy the wise out of Edom and understanding from Esau's mount,

9. And thy mighty ones, Teman, shall be dismayed,[4] so that warrior be cut off from Esau's mount;

10. For slaying,[5] for violence to thy brother Jacob, shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.

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[2] Vulg. Quomodo scrutati sunt Esau, investigaverunt abscondita ejus! a rendering which observes the plural of the verb, but overlooks its passive voice. Probably the nominative "secret places," should be applied to both clauses, or some parallel noun has dropt out of the first clause.

[3] *A wound*, or a snare, or, by another derivation, anything disgusting and repulsive; which may be the meaning here; the Babylonian or Ephraimite conqueror took bread of the Edomite and loathed its giver.

[4] *Dismayed*, or broken.

[5] *For slaying, for violence, &c.*, or, changing the accentuation, "for slaying thy brother out of violence."

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but with thorough searching, hungry foes hunt out Edom even to his border, no longer sparing him for a temporary alliance's sake against Judah.

8—11. Their craft no longer avails the retailers of

11. On the day of thy standing in front, on the day of strangers taking captive his substance, when aliens entered his gate, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, thou also wast as one of them.

12. Ah! look not on thy brother's[6] day, on the day of his estrangement, and rejoice not over Judah's sons in the day of their perishing, and magnify not thy mouth in the day of distress.

13. Enter not into the gate of my people in the day of their ruin; gaze not thou also upon his calamity in the day of his ruin, and cast not [*your women, their hands*] upon his substance in the day of his ruin,

14. And stand not at the crossing to cut off his fugitives, neither imprison his survivors in the day of distress.

15. For Jehovah's day is nigh upon all the nations: as thou diddest, shall be done unto thee; thy requital shall return upon thy head.

16. For as ye have drank [*the cup of vengeance*] on the mount of my sanctuary, all the nations shall drink it

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[6] Compare Psalm cxxxvii. 7. The Authorised Version of vv. 12, 13, 14, "Thou shouldest not have looked on," is beautiful, and substantially correct, for so Edom had done; but it is not literally precise, for the tense is a prohibitive future.

[7] The verb *cast* is in the Hebrew a feminine plural, which, if not a misreading, refers to the women-spoilers, as in Psalm lxviii. 12, 13, where those who had lain among the sheepfolds divided the glittering spoils.

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shrewd proverbs, who in policy encouraged the invader, and in bitterness watched him break down Zion.

12—14. As they aided Nebuchadnezzar or other invaders, aid is not wanting against them.

15. The sweep of destruction includes a larger circle, and the cup is drank to its dregs by the enemies of Zion.

constantly;[8] yea drink, and swallow, until they be as though they had never been.

17. But in Zion's mount shall be deliverance, and a sanctuary be; and the house of Jacob shall inherit their disinheritors.[9]

18. And the house of Jacob shall be fire, and the house of Joseph flame, and the house of Esau shall become stubble, and they shall kindle[1] upon them until they consume them, and there shall be no saviour to the house of Esau, for Jehovah hath spoken.[2]

19. And they of the south shall possess Esau's mount, and they of the plain the Philistines; and they shall possess the field of Ephraim and the field of Samaria; and Benjamin shall possess Gilead.

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[8] Jeremiah xlix. 12, is the best comment on this verse. Otherwise the nations drinking *constantly*, and yet perishing, might for תָּמִיד suggest תֵּימָן as if the nations should drink up Edom, until the Edomites became extinct.

[9] *Disinheritors*, with the slightest change of points; but with the existing points, possessions. Vulg. Possidebit domus Jacob eos qui se possederant, and LXX. *κατακληρονομήσουσιν ὁ οἶκος Ἰακὼβ τοὺς κατακληρονομήσαντας αὐτούς.*

[1] *Kindle*, or persecute. So in Psalm vii. 13, the words "ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors," though an excellent moral, rather should be, "maketh his arrows into burning ones," *i.e.* maketh them burn.

[2] *Spoken*, as if with oracular utterance. With this threat of excision the Poem probably ended, if even it extended originally so far.

17, 18. But under either Jehoshaphat or Amaziah, or on Zerubbabel's return from exile, or at latest, when the Maccabees had smitten the Syrian, the Prophet hopes, or already sees signs of a brighter day for his country.

19—21. He even gives directions for the re-distribution of the recovered soil, and hopes the frontier will be extended, north and south, from Sarepta to Saphar, or so that Israelites now straying in Phœnicia and in obscure

20. [3]And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel [*shall possess*] what is Canaanite[4] as far as Sarepta, and the exiles of Jerusalem what is in Sepharad[5] shall possess [*even*] the cities of the south. 21. And there shall come up deliverers[6] on the mount of Zion, to judge the mount of Esau, and the kingdom shall be Jehovah's.

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[3] Καὶ κατακληρονομήσουσιν οἱ ἐν ναγὲβ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Ἡσαῦ, καὶ οἱ ἐν τῇ σεφηλᾷ τοὺς ἀλλοφύλους, ... καὶ τῆς μετοικεσίας ἡ ἀρχὴ αὕτη τοῖς υἱοῖς Ἰσραὴλ γῆ τῶν Χαναναίων ἕως Σαρεπτῶν. Καὶ ἡ μετοικεσία Ἰερουσαλὴμ ἕως Ἐφραθά κατακληρ. τ. πόλεις τ. ναγὲβ. Vulg. "Omnia loca Chananæorum usque ad Sareptam, et transmigratio Jerusalem, quæ in Bosphoro est, possidebit civitates Austri."

[4] *What is Canaanite*—or, which are captive amongst the Canaanites, *i.e.* the Phœnicians.

[5] *What is in Sepharad*—or, which are in Sepharad. On these verses see Introduction, and comp. Ezek. xlvii. 13—21.

[6] *Deliverers.* Vulg. Salvatores, A.V. Saviours; rightly both—but wrongly LXX. ἀνασωζόμενοι.

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provinces of Babylon or Persia, shall return from separation to a kingdom organised by Priests, therefore owning Jehovah, the national and Levitical God, as its rightful King.

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA.

The reasons for Hosea's place in a chronological order of the Prophets are these. He neither, like Joel, speaks of a local calamity, or of merely bordering nations, such as Edom; nor like Amos (with whom Obadiah has been doubtfully associated,) sees the kingdom of Samaria tottering to its fall, yet with uncertainty, whether the fatal blow will come from Egypt or from the Philistine palaces of Ashdod (Amos iii. 1); but he beholds imperial Assyria before him, and mentions her king Shalman (probably Shalmaneser) by name. The storming of Beth-arbel (whether this is rightly placed in the vale of Jezreel; or more probably farther north, on a rocky hill, near the lake of Gennesareth:[1]) is not predicted by our Prophet, but is described by him as an event already past. We may conceive it, though not otherwise known, as a natural preliminary to the siege of Samaria. During the three years of that siege, (comp. 2 Kings xvii. 1—5,) the whole of this book may well have been written. This would make its date B.C. 723 to 721. Yet the book may embody the reflexions of many troubled years, fused into an unity by the eventful crisis. Within the half-century which preceded Samaria's fall, Zachariah had barely grasped the sceptre which the second Jeroboam's strong hand let fall. Shallum had slain Zachariah. Menahem had slain Shallum, and only by support purchased from Assyria left his kingdom to his son Pekahiah. Pekah had in turn slain Pekahiah, and lastly Hoshea had slain Pekah. This succession of tragedies answers to the pictures drawn in the 6th and 9th chapters.

[1] Robinson's Travels, vol. iii. sect. xv.

Born apparently in the Northern kingdom (and so far singular among the Prophets whose genuine writings remain to us) Hosea looked forth on a troubled world. The traditional title makes his father Beeri, which has been wrested into identity with the Reubenite Beerah, carried captive by the Assyrians, 1 Chron. v. 6; and is Rabbinically made to signify that his father was a prophet; but of himself he tells us barely once his name, and we shall find room for a doubt, if he tells us so much. The mingled rudeness and tenderness of the man's mind are indescribably marked. We hear in him the howl of the Dervish, checked by humaner relentings. He minces nothing, but calls vice by its ugliest name. The imminent downfall of his nation darkens on him as a calamity too great to be believed; as in the loss of some friend who has been all to us, such a bereavement sounds incredible. Again the sins of his people, kings raised by murder, princes conspiring, priests devouring sacred things, and a multitude making no difference between the holy and the unholy, provoke the sickle, like a ripe harvest. The fault is not in God, who is waiting to forgive, but in man who repents but for a moment, if at all. Only if the nation could be regenerated by judgment, born again to moral renewal out of the pangs of affliction, the old covenant with Jehovah would revive, and his compassion would have room. Alas! betrothed of right to the God of kindness and truth, this perverse people has wedded itself to impure idols, and stands stolid, or with formal rites and sacrifices, in the spot where the nobler generation should have had birth. They seek refuge in political alliances, the signs of servitude; offer presents to Assyria which scorns them; look for refuge to Egypt, which will be their grave.

Figuring these things under a striking image, the Prophet weds himself in act, or rather in parable, to an impure woman, who represents the faithful nation become a har-

lot, and whose children represent the apostate Israelites. Through a succession of chapters he paints the human provocations, the Divine wrath and relenting; the weak and fleeting repentance of Israel like the morning dew; the vain substitution of ritual for worship undefiled; the occasional falls into an actually consecrated indulgence (which possibly Ashtoreth's worship, though I believe not *Baal's*, might prompt); the fruitlessness of appeasements so unworthy, and the final weariness of even God's compassion; until, in disappointment at finding Judah little better than Samaria, the book closes upon the commenced, if not completed, tragedy, with promises to such of the people as will repent, and the Prophet's aspiration that they may be many.

In modern language, this is a poem of conscience or a sermon, rather than a prediction. It reads the moral lesson of events passing before men's eyes, and reveals the mystery of history, by turning that side of the curtain which is Providence. Still, as in Amos, God does nothing in the theatre of the world, but he takes gifted spirits, his servants and prophets, behind the scenes, and reveals the instruction of the drama. No proof can be given, that any event absolutely future when the writing was published, is therein foretold. The moral certainty of this conclusion is not lessened by doubts about the precise meaning of a few passages, for what is important is clear.

It has been asked, did God command such a marriage as that of Hosea and Gomer? Or did the Prophet, swayed by his own impulse, and associating it in imagination with the apostasy of Israel, contract an equivocal connexion, and see in it a picture of the falling away of the nation? Rather, is the alliance with Gomer a parable, such as our manners shrink from, but not too highly figurative for the Hebrew mind? One more question may be asked, as a possible, though fanciful, suggestion. Since the title which

has "Hosea son of Beeri," may be indefinitely later than the book, and the name of Hosea may be considered to occur but once in the first verse, is the last king of Israel, whom God, ordering all things by his secret word, had suffered to wed his fallen people, as an adulterous woman, here intended as the person bidden to contract the marriage? If such an imagination were admitted, we should no longer have the name of the writer of our book, but he would remain one of the most gifted of the sons of the Prophets, known to man only by the work which he did for God. A strong reason against this fourth supposition, in spite of the tempting support which such names as Gomer (*completion*), Lo-ruhama (*unpitied*), lend it, is the command repeated and intensified in the third chapter, where the Prophet no longer describes the agent in the third person, but in the first. Even if this were explained by some event in the Prophet's family, or by a symbolical adaptation of the primary image, the supposition would have an air of paradox.

If voices are counted, the majority of interpreters, and specially those of the stricter Patristic school, Cyril of Jerusalem in the 4th century, and Dr. Pusey in our own time, have thought it most reverent to make the Prophet describe a literal action. The principle of authority, as injunction, seems thus preserved; and if Revelation be by our external senses, and Morality have no measure but Divine Ordinance, the command sanctifies the act, "*Deo jubente, nihil turpe est*," as Jerome imagines the defenders of this view saying. Two great interpreters, Jerome of old, with his readiness to turn inconvenient facts into figures, and Calvin, with his strong intellect and pure conscience, have set themselves on the figurative side. Illustrating his case by Jeremiah's journey in a figure to Babylon, Jerome says, "*Illud in typo, quia fieri non potuit; ergo et hoc in typo, quia "si fiat, turpissimum est.*" In a similar strain, but with

more force, Calvin urges the unlikelihood of such a command, its repugnance to the spirit of Levitical sanctity, and its offensiveness to the popular conscience. While one reads Calvin one is convinced; yet the question occurs whether the picture of morals suggested by the Old Testament implies that the Hebrews would have been repelled, as other ages and races are, by such an example. No language is so unveiled as the Hebrew in describing animal things. The invention of names for marriage and conjugal duty may be claimed by Rome, Britain, perhaps Etruria, never by Palestine; the Romans, even in their degeneracy, noted the licentiousness of the Semitic races; the histories of the Patriarchs, Judges, and Kings, confirmed by the unconsciousness of the writers, forbid us to assume delicacy of symbol as indispensable to the Prophets. Can we, then, without a painful shock, imagine the human passion here mingling with the Divine parable? The answer to this question depends upon the degree in which we conceive the servants of God of old to have preserved their spontaneous agency and correspondent infirmities in the execution even of sacred missions. The unminced coarseness of language throughout Hosea's writings might justify an affirmative answer. If we shrink from it, we may fall back on the authority of Jerome and the reasoning of Calvin. Without for a moment thinking coarseness a mark of innocence, or desiring to consecrate the shortcomings of religious writers, I incline to the mere Parable view, as an adequate interpretation, and on the whole, as the most probable one.

The extreme difficulty of Hosea is in parts, and not in the whole. It arises partly from his abrupt genius, which rejoices in transition from indignation to tenderness, leaving the reader's instinct to supply the suppressed links of reasoning. Partly it is forced upon the Prophet, by the awkward divisions of our chapters, which seem habitually

to end in the middle of a sentence. The largest allowance for the jealousy with which familiar associations are regarded, will, I trust, not prevent the sincere reader from acknowledging some improvements on this head in the present version, even if some of the changes should appear doubtful. I must venture to take one step farther. Not only our modern arrangement of chapters, but the anticipation of it involved to some extent in the ancient Hebrew portions for reading and the Masoretic punctuation of sentences, appear to me in Hosea eminently questionable. That rhythmical balance, or recurrent echo of thought returning upon itself with varied expression, the perfection of which we have in the Psalms, appears to me not to have been developed in Hosea's style, but to have been occasionally introduced by editors whose ears had been formed on the liturgical cadence of the later Prophets and Psalms. His thoughts do not uniformly move in mental couplets, though the germ of such movement is there. His stream is continuous, though broken into waves. The proof of such a theory, if it can be proved, lies in the sequence of thought, and may be tested by the English reader. I do not know that any previous critic has made this remark, but am gratified to find in particular passages of the learned Ewald's version confirmation of the inductions which led me to it. The fourth chapter, vv. 4, 5, and the three latest chapters will supply instances for comparison. On the other hand, where the rhythm required restoration, I have restored it, as with advantage, I trust, in ch. iii. 15 [A.V. iv. 11]. It was a great pleasure to me to feel justified in softening the apparent harshness of viii. 14, by comparison of the context, into a cry for pity, like Christ's lamenting over Jerusalem. To many readers I hope this may be a relief.

The minute variations in Hosea are numerous. In the famous text "Israel called out of Egypt," ch. x. 1, I have followed religiously the Hebrew, and the context. Bishop

Kidder's Boyle Lecture will supply the most tolerable defence of the curious application (perhaps ornamental,) in our first Gospel. In the hardly less celebrated "calves of our lips," ch. xii. 14, I have preferred the Greek; not as thinking it supernaturally attested by its citation in the Christian Epistles (Hebr. xiii. 15), but because Hebrew idiom forbids a noun to stand unsoftened, as פָּרִים *calves*, in construction before another *quasi*-genitive, while a transfer of the final *mem*, ם, as a preposition to the following word gives grammar and sense. In some cases doubtful, but unimportant, especially the עַל ON HIGH, (it can hardly mean the Most High), of ch. vi. 16, and x. 7, I have translated a text guarded by legitimate jealousies from needless conjecture.

Some passages in Hosea are open to special consideration.

i. 4. It is remarkable that in reviewing from the outset the scenes which provoked his country's fall, the Prophet fixes his eye on Jehu's murder of Ahab's sons and Baal's worshippers as the beginning of the series. Elisha counselled that murder: probably Elijah designed it. Were there factions, or opinions, as of York and Lancaster, among the Prophets? Or did the later learn from experience, that revolution and massacre, though prompted by zeal, sow a harvest of blood? Let the reader decide. The commands of Omniscience seem not mutable by contingencies; though man's conception and embodiment of them may vary. It may be our own error which would separate by lines of geometrical demarcation the floating compound of Divine impulse and human execution: or which assumes the existence of separate historical regions, in which either of the two must be alternately exclusive or excluded.

We have in i. 10—13, not the least striking of the pas-

sages which suggest the idea of subsequent insertion in the original writings of the Prophets; as has been explained in the preface to Amos. The spirit of rapid transition and relenting is so habitual in Hosea, that we may understand here his mind refusing to dwell on God's abandonment of his nation, without throwing in, as his faith rallies, an anticipation of a brighter day, in which repentance shall revoke the sentence. Even though the anticipation has not been fulfilled, we may assign it scope in the future: or if it had been fulfilled, with God no prediction can be impossible. The difficulty lies, first, in the sequence of thought, which is interrupted by a promise in the midst of the threatening; and secondly, in the language, which introduces the title, *Living God*, unknown to Hosea, but natural in the return from the exile, when some fervent spirit would animate the broken nation by a belief in the eternity of their Saviour. The famous Eichhorn, a man whose poetical penetration exceeded his great knowledge of languages, and still more his moderate faith, was so struck by this, that he removed the passage from his text. Without presuming so much, I have let the context persuade me to use variation of type as a suggestion.

The same idea presents itself, if not in the beginning of the third chapter, at least in its fifth verse. We have there a return promised, though no exile has yet been mentioned; and a re-union of the rent Davidical kingdom desired, though in chapters xi. and xii. possibly in chapters iv. and ix., the Prophet's aspiration is not in the direction of monarchy, but in that of the primitive "theocracy." I can but indicate probabilities, where the evidence is not cogently decisive.

Although the morality of the Prophets is in general of a high order, and by its fitness to promote the world's

welfare is attested as breathing the spirit of the Divine Governor of the world, it may be asked, was their policy wise? Samuel would have prevented monarchy, and failing in that, restrained the monarch. Hosea sighs for the unoppressive rule of Prophets, and Micah iv. 15, &c. for the old simplicity of the Judges. Isaiah and Jeremiah, bowing to the sceptre, endeavour to guide the hand that wields it. The general tone of the Prophets, like that of Dervish, Monk, and the more ascetic Puritan, is adverse not only to sinful luxury, but to commerce and armies, the strength of kingdoms. Alliances now with Assyria, and now with Egypt, are condemned, though no refuge of a more practical kind is pointed out. Subjugation by foreigners is treated as a judgment, though history shews little probability that a priestly commonwealth, or a community of little freeholders, without commerce or national dignity, could have escaped absorption by the greater Empires. In fact, every Empire which came in contact with the Jews, conquered them to some extent. When the policy of the Prophets, as represented by Daniel, triumphed in the Maccabees, the result was enthusiasm and degeneracy, not piety. The courageous fanaticism which drew the flames of Titus and the plough of Hadrian across the walls of Jerusalem, whether we admire or condemn it, was the natural outgrowth of the spirit which we deem divine in Joel, Hosea, Micah. Shall we not conclude, that the wrath and partisanship of man, though associated with the perception of sacred truths, are unsafe guides in the policy of nations? although it may be contended that such men as Judas the Gaulonite and Bar-cochebas added unhallowed flame to that which they handed down from the Prophets. The history of Swiss freedom, so long preserved, if compared with the shorter-lived brilliancy of the Italian re-

publics, confirms the policy of the Prophets, yet leaves its elements human to our apprehension.

In ch. xii. 10, one of the most striking texts in the Old Testament raises some questions. The splendid promise, "I will ransom them from the power of the Grave; "I will redeem them from death: O Death, I will be "thy plagues; O Grave, I will be thy destruction"— occurs in the innermost centre of a complaint that Ephraim's refusal to be reformed was bringing on Jehovah's irrevocable stroke, and the invader like a wind from the desert. No allowance for abrupt transition (supposing the thought consecutive,) can make such a promise suit such a place. Hence the greatest Hebrew scholars, Jarchi and Kimchi, supported by the Chaldee version, understand the latter clauses to mean in effect, "Now I will be "in my words to thee death, my sentence shall be thy de- "struction." This changes the promise into a threat, and makes the sense consecutive, but treats the words violently. Notwithstanding much repugnance to such a change, I should have felt compelled to acquiesce in it, if the contingent or hypothetical sense, as given in my version, had not at length dawned upon me. Jehovah would have ransomed even from the Assyrian's sword, if the absence of repentance had not made his decree irreversible. The word אהי, grammatically rendered *I will be*, is more probably a form of איה *where*, as already a few verses above, and as the Greek has it. If any object, as many may, that in restoring to the Prophet his meaning, I deprive the Apostle of his promise of the resurrection, I shelter myself under the great shield of Calvin, whose incorruptible magnanimity here, as elsewhere, puts to shame Prelatic subterfuges, and blames the expositors who by foisting in Christian senses, manifoldly erred, "*multis modis errarunt.*"

" Et argutiæ illæ magno plausu acceptæ fuerunt; ideo in " toto Papatu sine controversiâ hoc pro oraculo viget, " quod Christus fuerit morsus mortis. Sed interea si quis " propius prophetæ verba expendat, videbit illos inscitè " et turpiter abusos esse Prophetæ testimonio." (Rosenm. in l.) He proceeds to argue that the quotation in 1 Cor. xv. is an illustration, and not a proof, of St. Paul's doctrine. Alas! how far have our Church and our generation fallen from the integrity of the stern Calvin! " Nobis " summoperè studendum est," he says, " ut *maneat vera* " *et certa Scripturæ intelligentia.*" It is characteristic in every way of Bp. Horsley that he revived in its strongest form the error of the dark ages, which Calvin had branded.

Of Hosea's personal history nothing is known. The long ministration ascribed to him is only a mode of saying that the allusions in his book suppose a connexion in his mind between the sins of the house of Jehu and the kingdom's ruin. Hence it has been thought, he must have seen Zechariah the last of that house, if not also Jeroboam, as the writer of the Title inferred: but this inference is no more necessary than to imagine the author of Genesis contemporary with Adam, because he dates the prospects of the earth from the first man who occupied it. As our own Milton supposes the Deity in Council, so the Hebrew Prophets throw themselves in imagination backward, and picture the secret causes, of which the world beholds the event. Such a process was the more natural to Hosea, since none of the Prophets is more directly religious. He mourns not, like Joel or Amos, a calamity, for the removal of which the Divine wrath is to be appeased; but mourns primarily that defection of the people from its rightful Lord, of which the national ruin is only the result. Notwithstanding something repulsive in his language, no

Prophet gains more upon his readers. Those who commence him with repugnance, will leave him with regret.

Rosenmüller's Commentaries on this, as on the other Prophets, are rich in illustrations, from which I have selected what my plan required. Maurer is accurate and ingenious. Ewald shews his usual critical mastery. To him I am indebted for the light thrown on the unity of the book by the application to it of the image of the breaking forth of children in ch. xii. 8. Dr. W. H. Mill, the last learned high churchman of England, mourned during the latest months of his life the loss of a carpet-bag, containing his lectures on Hosea. Mr. Maurice has written a volume of sermons on this and other Prophets of Israel with a fine spiritual insight, but with their value lessened, as too often happens in their author's works, by habitual disregard of facts. Dr. Pusey's work, little needing mention from me, is good as homily, hardly as version, still less as commentary. Newcome and Secker have helped me less in Hosea than elsewhere. In all difficulties I have, with some deference to our Authorised Version, endeavoured to be guided chiefly by the context, which, for good or for evil, has been my only master.

The summing up of Cocceius, (an able, though old-fashioned Dutch expositor,) on the marriage with Gomer, is this: "Nostri volunt esse parabolam meram. Nos non "decernimus, utrum in re, an in ecstasi et visione, an in "verbo solo parabolicè hæc accipienda sint. Ad scopum "prophetiæ perinde est."

HOSEA.

The Word of the ETERNAL which was to Hosea son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel.

1. The beginning of the word of the ETERNAL by Hosea.

2. Then the ETERNAL spake to Hosea, Go, take thee a wife of hiring, and children *born* of hiring, for the land goeth utterly a hiring from after the ETERNAL.

3. So he went and took Gomer, a woman[1] of two cakes of figs, and she conceived and bare him a son;

4. And the ETERNAL said to him, Call his name God's-

[1] *A woman of two cakes of figs*, or daughter of Diblaim.

The Title gives the traditional conjecture respecting the book, formed by Jewish grammarians, possibly in the school of Hillel, a little before the Christian era; but at a date unfixed, though hardly earlier than the Maccabees, and certainly not so late as St. Jerome's time, A.D. 400.

1. Thoughts which no less than the Eternal Spirit woke in Hosea's mind, here begin to find voice. Either God suffered Hosea the last king to wed fallen Israel, as it were a fallen woman of low price; or more probably, the Prophet weds under a strong impulse, or else represents himself in parable as wedding, one who may serve as type, *i.e.* pattern, of a nation revolting from its heart's true lord.

4. The children so inauspiciously born are called

scattering (*i.e.* Jezreel),[2] for yet a little while, and I visit the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.

5. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I break the bow of Israel in the valley of God's-scattering.

6. And she conceived again, and bare a daughter; and he said to him, call her name Unpitied, (Lo-ruchamah,) for I will no more have pity again upon the house of Israel, but will utterly take them away.

7. But the house of Judah I will have pity upon, and will save them by the ETERNAL their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses and by horsemen.

8. And when she had conceived the *girl* Un-pitied, (Lo-ruchamah,) she conceived, and bare a son.

9. And he said, Call his name, No people mine, (Lo-

[2] Jezreel means God's-scattering, and also God's-sowing.

Jezreel, *God's-scattering*, because God will scatter to the winds a rebellious folk, and scatter in its place the seed of a more dutiful nation.

5—6. The Vale of Jezreel, or Plain of Esdraelon, already perhaps marked by conflict with the Assyrian, seems a fit place for the judgment, and its name acts significantly as a parable. 2ndly, a child is called *Unpitied* (Lo-ruchama), because the destruction at hand seemed unrelenting.

7. But of Judah the Prophet hopes better things, knowing little of it as yet, but hoping its religious character may be better preserved; and that the city of Jehovah's worship may be a city of peace.

8, 9. A third child is named so as to signify the reprobation, or national casting off, of Israel's northern

Ammi,) for ye are not my people, and I will not belong to you.

10. Yet shall be[3] the number of the sons of Israel as the sand of the sea, which can neither be measured nor numbered, and it shall be in the place where is said to them,[4] You are no people of mine, it shall be said to them; 11. You are the sons of the Living God. And the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel shall be gathered together, and set for themselves one head, and go up from the land, for great the day of God's-scattering (*or* Jezreel); 12. Say *then* to your brothers, People Mine, (Amm-i,) and to your sister, Thou that art Pitied, (Ruchamah.)

13. Plead with your mother, plead; for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband; but let her put away her

[3] *Yet shall be, &c.* LXX. καὶ ἦν ὁ ἀριθμὸς, κ. τ. λ.

[4] *Where is said to them.* Vulg. Ubi dicetur illis.

kingdom. Compare Psalm lxxviii. 67, 68, where the feeling is expressed, which St. Paul inverts, and contrasts spiritually, so as to teach God's rejection of all claims by external birth in favour of spiritual faithfulness and purity. Compare St. John's Gospel, iv. 20, 24.

10, 11, 12. Either the Prophet relenting imagines the Divine mercy large enough to embrace the Ten tribes together with Judah and Benjamin, and to set up again a Davidical kingdom; or, more probably, those verses, which so greatly interrupt the line of thought and argument, were inserted by some hopeful patriot in the time between the return from Babylon and the Asmonean Princes.

13, 14, 15. The Prophet then continues, or returns to, his main argument of the infidelity of Israel to her God,

hiring from her face, and her adulteries from between her breasts;

14. Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day of her being born, and make her as a wilderness, and set her as a dry land, and make her die with thirst,

15. And her sons (*lest*)[5] I have no pity upon; for they are sons born of hiring; for their mother played the harlot; and she that conceived them was brought to shame:

16. For she said, Let me go after my lovers, the givers of my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.

II.

1. Therefore behold me hedging thy way with thorns, and I fence up the fence, that she shall not find her paths; and when she pursues her lovers, she shall not overtake them, and when she seeks them, she shall not find them.

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[5] *Lest I have no pity.* Vulg. Non miserebor, but *ne miserear* would have been truer to the Hebrew, which carries on particles, and specially negatives, to subjoined clauses, without repeating them.

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and the danger of the Divine wrath throwing her back from the fruitful land to a life of tents in the wilderness. If she is faithless, how can she count on God's faithfulness?

16. She fancied that the wealthy kingdoms, with whom she contracted commerce and alliance were the sources of her coarse prosperity, which she values above truth, righteousness, sanctity.

1. Distress and siege at length interrupt her commerce and her embassies.

2. Then will she say, Let me go back again[6] to my first husband, for it was better with me then than now,

3. Though she knew not that I gave her the corn and the wine and the fresh oil, and made silver plentiful for her, and gold, which they wrought[7] for their lord [Baal].

4. Therefore will I turn back[8] and take away my corn in its time, and my new wine in its season, and strip off my wool and my flax for covering her nakedness.

5. Therefore now will I uncover her shame to the eyes of her lovers, and no man shall deliver her out of my hand:

6. But I will cause all her mirth to cease, her festival, her new moon, and her sabbath, and her every appointed season.

7. And I will lay waste her vine and her fig-tree, of which she said, These are my love-tokens, which my lovers have given me, and I will make them a forest that the wild creature of the field devour them;

8. And I will visit upon her the days of the lords, (*i.e.* the Baals,) to whom she burns incense, while she decks

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[6] *Go back again.* Heb. Go, and return.

[7] *Which they wrought.* So Vulg. fecerunt, but LXX. she wrought, ἐποίησε.

[8] *Turn back, and take away.* Or simply, Take away again.

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2. She begins to suspect that even worldly prosperity has a higher Giver. 3. It was God who gave her the means of fattening until she became wanton; 4, 5, as she learns, when He takes away His own gifts, and makes her contemptible to the great kingdoms, and foreign priesthoods, which she blindly idolised.

6, 7, 8. Her festivals of religion mingled with mirth become times of mourning. Instead of sitting every man under his vine and fig-tree, rejoicing in peaceful subjection

herself with her nose-ring,[9] and her necklace, and goes after her lovers, and forgets me, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

9. Therefore behold *now* I entice her and make her go into the wilderness, and speak to her heart, and give her the vineyards from thence, and make the valley of trouble[1] (*i.e.* Achor), into a door of hope; and she will answer thither as in the days of her youth, and as in the day of her coming up out of the land of Egypt.

10. And it shall be in that day, is the saying of the ETERNAL, thou shalt call me Husband mine, (Ishi,) and shalt no more call me Lord mine, (Baali.) But I will

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[9] *Nose-ring*. Hebr. *Nezem*. So Rebekah received a nose-ring, Gen. xxiv. 22, though reluctance to conceive so barbarous an ornament in Scripture, made the Versions turn it into ear-rings. Lat. inaures. Gr. τὰ ἐνώτια, and so here.

[1] *Valley of trouble*. Heb. Achor. Possibly an allusion to the valley, in which expiation for Achan's stealing became the door of hope, and of Canaan's conquest, Joshua viii. 24. Or more generally, trouble changing to joy. Compare the valley of Baca, weeping. Psalm lxxxiv. 7.

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to Assyria, her sons behold their land desolate; the animal fanaticism in which they indulged, fails in the moral strength of true religion.

9. But the Prophet trusts, that by thus bringing sorrow on men, God only desires to reclaim them; and when they remember in repentance the better vows of their childhood, or the earlier piety of their nation, God is never deaf to their cry. He can open a door out of the valley of trouble, even of sin.

10. A severer and simpler piety must separate the repentant from all abused symbols or names. As the brazen serpent, though a hallowed relic, was to be broken, lest it be worshipped, so the name of *Jehovah*, the alone Eternal Being, who by the word of His will maintains

remove the names of the lords (Baalim) out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name.[2]

11. And in that day will I strike a league for them with the wild creature of the field, and with the bird of the heavens, and with the creeping thing on the ground, and I will shiver bow and sword and battle from the land, and make them rest in confidence.

12. And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, betroth thee to me in righteousness and in judgment, and in mercy and in pity: even betroth thee to me in faithfulness,[3] so that thou know the ETERNAL.

13. And it shall be in that day, I will answer, is the saying of the ETERNAL; I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth, and the earth shall answer the corn and the new wine and the fresh oil, and they shall answer to God's-sowing (*or* Jezreel). 14. And I will sow her to

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[2] *No more be remembered.* Or, with sounder punctuation, men shall no more remember them by their name.

[3] *Faithfulness.* Heb. *Amounah;* a word not to be confounded with faith in the sense of confidence, Heb. *Batach;* nor even with faith as trust, from the Hebrew verb *Chasah,* though nearer the latter; but rather the moral quality of fidelity.

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whatever has true life, must be separated from lower objects, and from all that is falsely called lord, whether in nature or art.

11, 12, 13. On such true repentance, wisely directed, the true and living God will restore his blessings, with peace to nations, comfort to sinners, and betrothal of the yearning heart. By thus seeking first the kingdom of God, and what He calls righteousness, calling it so in truth, men will have all other things added to them, as Solomon asking wisdom had also other things. Thus Hosea truly bears

myself in the earth, and have pity upon her that was Unpitied (*Lo-ruchamah,*) and will say to him that was not my people (Lo-Amm-i,) Thou art my people, and he will say, O my God.

III.

1. Then the ETERNAL said to me again, Go, love a woman loved of her friend, yet adulterous, according to the ETERNAL's loving the sons of Israel, while they turn to other gods, and love sweet-cakes of raisins.

2. So I bought her to me for fifteen of silver and an omer of barley and a half omer of barley,

3. And I said to her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not take hire, and shalt not be for man, and so will I for thee.

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[4] *Loved of her friend.* So the Masoretic punctuation, and rightly; though the Greek ἀγαπῶσαν πονηρὰ, loving evil, which implies a different punctuation, has been needlessly preferred. Sweet-cakes of raisins; or of dried grapes; eaten as a dainty, 2 Samuel vi. 19; possibly as a love-feast, Canticles ii. 5, here as part of an idolatrous ceremonial.

[5] *Half-omer of barley.* Vulg. Dimidio coro hordei. The Greek has νέβελ οἴνου, a flask of wine; which is probably right; for why should barley be repeated? The word *Lethech*, not used elsewhere, may suit wine as well as barley, and שערים may be repeated by mis-writing.

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witness to Christ, by partaking of the spirit which God gave Jesus not by measure.

14. So the natural union between Man and his Maker, God and his children, Jehovah and Israel, may be restored; and the veil of wrath vanish from the Father's face, when the sin is removed, which prevented it from shining on Man, or Man from seeing it.

1, 2, 3. Again the parable is repeated. This time an adulteress, whom her husband loves in vain, stands for

4. Since many days shall the sons of Israel abide without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim.[6]

5. Afterward shall the sons of Israel seek again the ETERNAL their God and David their king, and turn reverently to the ETERNAL and to his goodness in the aftertime of days.

6. Hear the word of the ETERNAL, you sons of Israel; for the ETERNAL has a plea with the dwellers of the land,

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[6] *Pillar, Ephod, Teraphim.* The stone pillar, set up as at Bethel, one of the earliest temples of rude religion in so many lands, (Compare British *Maen-hir*) and the Teraphim, household images, (as it were Penates,) are here joined with the orthodox priestly Ephod; either implying, that true religion being deserted, false religion also shall fail; or not impossibly, because the symbols, whether natural or artificial, of worship, were not in Hosea's time so divergent or hostile, but that privation of any of them seemed an evil. So the old Semitic word Baal, Lord, was only then by polemical use acquiring an ill sound. So Azazel, Beelzebub, and other such names. Comp. Genesis xxviii. 18, xxxi. 13, 19, 34.

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the Hebrew nation loved by God, yet straying from Him.

4. The loneliness of the wicked woman deserted represents the sickness of heart of Israel, when all her old forms of religion fail her, no more feast or sacrifice, no prayer by pillar, no priestly robe, (or, as some, no familiar idol's name, compare Judges viii. 27 with 1 Samuel xiv. 3) and no household images. The more I reflect on this passage, the more it seems to me that the ensigns and practices of a religion which the Prophet disapproves, are intended throughout.

5. Still the Prophet's fond heart looks out for a better time, unless this fifth verse be a later insertion in order to encourage Israel's restoration after the Exile.

6, 7, 8. The Prophet explains the causes of the divorce between God and the nation which he had chosen as a

because there is no truthfulness and no kindness,[7] and no knowledge of God in the land.

7. Swearing and lying, and killing and stealing, and committing adultery, burst forth, and blood touches blood.

8. Therefore the land mourneth, and every dweller therein fainteth; *every one* among the wild creatures of the field, and among the birds of heaven; and also the fish of the sea are taken away.

9. Yet *they say*, Let[8] no one plead, neither let any man rebuke; and thy people are as wranglers with the priest.

10. Therefore thou stumblest in the day, and also the prophet of thy[9] people stumbleth in the night; and I destroy[1] thy mother.

11. Destroyed[2] are my people, from having no knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I reject thee

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[7] *No truthfulness, and no kindness.* The profoundest difference between the Prophet and the mass of his commentators consists in this: that such words as *truth*, *mercy*, and the like, are used by the Prophet in their most natural sense (for being true and kind in thought and deed, &c.) while by the others they are twisted into technical senses, such as the true faith in certain books or doctrines, and mercy shewn on technical considerations, &c.

[8] *Let no one plead.* The prohibitive particle implies, that this is the desire of the offenders; not a description of a fact.

[9] *Prophet of thy people;* Or, as the Hebrew is pointed, "the people with thee." But note the recurrence of the word People in connexion with cutting off.

[1] *Destroy.* Vulg. tacere feci.

[2] *Destroyed.* Vulg. Conticuit Populus meus. Rosenm. Exscindendus est populus meus. The verb is an historical past; though in verse 10 it may look to the future; yet not in verse 11.

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bride. Desolation has come on man and beast because truthfulness and kindness had failed.

9. Hardness of heart has been deaf to rebuke; sanctity has lost its hold on men's hearts.

10, 11. God, finding no difference between the teacher

also from being priest to me; and thou forgettest the law of thy God, I forget also thy sons.

12. As they became many, so they sinned against me; so change I their honour into disgrace.

13. They eat the sin[3] of my people, and set their heart upon their iniquity.

14. Therefore comes it to pass, as with the people, so with the priest, and I visit upon them their ways, and requite him his doings.[4]

15. So when they eat, they shall not be satisfied; when they go a hiring, they shall not multiply; since they have forsaken the ETERNAL, to follow[5] whoredom, and wine and new wine steal their heart.

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[3] *Sin*, or sin-offering; the more the sins, the more the offerings, which were to the priests, as tithes now, a maintenance. Or, it is possible, the offerings here meant may have been idolatrous; but less likely.

[4] *His*, or their doings.

[5] *To follow*, or observe, *i.e.* following the vice as consecrated into a religious observance; the opposite extreme to the fanatical celibacy of the East; giving license to Nature's impulses, instead of governing them for ends of duty. The mispointing of this verse turned the complaint of the last clause into a frigid maxim, and the true reading *their* heart (לִבָּם), preserved in the Chaldee and Syriac, dropped out of the Hebrew.

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and taught, leaves the blind guide and blind follower to stumble in their own way. His eternal law makes true knowledge the inheritance of priesthoods and safeguard of teachers.

12, 13, 14. As the Levites, formerly a weak and dependent body, grew in power and numbers, which took place between the reigns of Solomon and Hezekiah, they abused their dignity, and looked for the flesh of the sacrifice, instead of the contrite or thankful heart, which the sacrifice ought to signify.

15. God gives no blessing on such greediness.

16. My people inquires of his stick, and his staff gives him counsel; for the impulse[6] of hiring has led him astray, and they go a hiring from obedience to their God,

17. Upon the tops of the mountains they sacrifice, and upon the hills they burn incense; beneath ilex and poplar, and turpentine tree, because its shade is pleasant.

18. Therefore shall your daughters be for hire, and your brides commit adultery; I will not visit it upon your daughters, when they go for hire, nor upon your brides when they commit adultery;

19. Since they themselves go apart with harlots, and worship[7] with the accursed women; so the people that understandeth not stumbleth.

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[6] *Impulse*, or spirit. The mighty rushing wind of inclination.

[7] *Worship with the accursed women.* Lit. Sacrifice with the consecrated women. Comp. Heb. of 1 Kings xv. 11. Also, the temple of Mylitta at Babylon. Herod. I. 199-131; the ill repute of Cyprus, the temple-women of India; and as an analogy, the usurpation of matrimonial rites by the feudal lord in the Middle Ages, (Robertson, Charles V.), if not too in our own time in Russia. How near a similar abuse of a natural impulse, ending in the divorce of purity from religion, lay at times to the Israelites, the sons of Eli shew.

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16. They practise divination with the staff, a Chaldean invention, as Cyril says, called by the Greeks ῥαβδομαντεία (comp. Ezekiel, xxi. 21,) or worship of a wooden idol (Delubrum) may be intended.

17—19. Men, who give themselves to vice, may exact purity from their wives and daughters, but the contagion of such evil spreads; or, as the Prophet views it, God will not hedge round with awe and judgment the home of men who betray its duties; but He who is equal in justice and calls all things by their right names, will let the adulterer suffer adultery; and where religion is betrayed, He will not keep morality alive.

IV.

1. If thou, Israel, art for hire, yet let not Judah be guilty; and come you not to Gilgal, and go not up to the house of iniquity, (Beth-aven,) or else swear not by the life of the ETERNAL.

2. Since Israel hath gone astray like a straying heifer, now the ETERNAL pastures them like a lamb in the wide waste: associated with idols is Ephraim; leave thou him alone.

3. Their drink is soured:[8] greedily they go sinning; eagerly love shame the shields of the land. *When* the storm has folded it in its wings, then will they be ashamed for their sacrifices.

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[8] The text and meaning of these verses are minutely doubtful. The drink may be *soured*, as it were adulterated, (see Isaiah i. 21,)—or it may be *removed*, only to make way for fresh vice. The words "*eagerly love shame*," should, as the Hebrew text stands, be "have loved to bring shame," or "love those who bring" it. Omitting nothing, and barely altering a letter, I think the text most faithfully represented by reading אהב אהבו as an intensive infinitive, like the preceding הזנה הזנו. I see no reason to alter מגניה. *Storm.* Lit. Hebr. the wind. "*Will be ashamed for their sacrifices*," might be rendered, "their altars shall be desolate." 4. *The hunters have set deep the*

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1. Still in his simplicity the Prophet, who has seen the sin of Samaria, hopes that Judah may be better; else, why is she the Church of God? Better, if indeed she did not worship or swear by Him. There should be a difference between God's house, Bethel, and the neighbouring idol's house, Bethaven.

2. When we draw nigh to God, He draws nigh to us. The people that forsakes him is forsaken.

3. Either, their excellent things are spoiled; or it may be meant, that they go from sin to sin. Thus sowing the wind, they reap desolation.

4. Hear this, O priests, and hearken, O house of Israel; Give ear, O house of the king, for towards you is the judgment; since you have been a snare upon Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor; and the hunters have set deep the slaughter.

5. Yet am I a rebuker of them all; I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me; for now Ephraim thou hast gone hiring, *and* Israel is defiled.

6. They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God, for the spirit of hiring is in their midst, and they know not the ETERNAL, but the pride of Israel answereth[9] to his face.

7. So Israel and Ephraim shall fall in their iniquity; Judah also falleth with them.

8. With their flocks and their herds they go to seek the ETERNAL, and find him not; he hath withdrawn from them; they dealt treacherously by the ETERNAL.

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slaughter; or the goaders in slaying have set deep, is a most vexed passage, in which the connexion of thought guides almost more than the words. The word for hunters, שטים may mean apostates. The LXX. have οἱ ἀγρεῦοντες τὴν θήραν κατέπηξαν, which carries on the image of the sentence, if a false division of the verses had not misled so many expositors. I venture to hope a change of pause here may be accepted as an improvement.

[9] *Answereth*—or, as most versions, shall be humbled. Both here, and below, vi. 11, defiance seems intended, whether shewing itself in the defiant face, or to the face even of Almighty God.

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4. The priests, who, as our bishops, were the rightful guides, had become ensnarers of souls. Such religion as theirs was a slaughter.

5—7. As if God who made the eye could not see, and He who planted the ear no longer hear, they go astray in obstinate pride;

8. Then, having fallen, they make a show of religion, and offer him a hollow worship which He disdains.

9. Since they have brought forth strange sons ;[1] now shall a new moon devour them with their portions.

10. Blow trumpet in Gibeah, cornet in Ramah, shout loudly at Beth-aven, After thee, O Benjamin.[2]

11. Ephraim becomes a desolation: in the day of rebuke of the tribes of Israel, I made known uprightness.

12. The princes of Judah are as removers of the boundary; upon them will I pour my overflowing wrath as water.

13. Ephraim is oppressed and deprived of judgment,[3]

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[1] *Strange sons:* Possibly the verb "*brought forth,*" should be pointed as a passive, *Pahul;* or even as a noun with the affix possessive ; *e. g.* "Surely they are born strangers" — or, "Strangers are his children ;" therefore a strange thing חָדֶשׁ shall befall them ; or a single month חֹדֶשׁ shall destroy them; or their own festivals shall be their ruin.

[2] After thee, O Benjamin, if the text is correct, a cry of pursuit ; but possibly to be compared with ch. x. 10, below.

[3] *Deprived.* Hebr. broken. *Mandate,* or *Oppressor.* Hebrew צַו, the injunction : *i.e.* of the Assyrian, imposing tribute, as the price of help ; but the slightest, a hardly perceptible change of letter gives צַר an oppressor, that is the Assyrian, invoked as an ally, and coming as conqueror. The LXX. *ὀπίσω τῶν ματαίων* and Vulg. *post sordes* have suggested either שָׁוְא or צוֹא as possibly the true reading : but neither aptly. Still less can we understand צַו *command,* to mean self-will, as if the Prophet was thinking of unscriptural, or self-devised, doctrines, as opposed to Divine commands. See vi. 13.

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9. He looks on them as strangers, another month will bring their end.

10, 11, 12. Have we not already heard the enemy's trumpet, and the cry of pursuit? while the Prophet preaches in vain, the politic princes remove their own boundary.

13. So little insight into the causes of things had they, that they invited the impost of the invader, (as Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver,) thinking Jehovah too weak to protect them ; as Ahaz also cut off the gold of the Temple to pacify Tiglath-Pileser. (Comp. 2 Kings xv. 19 ; xvi. 7, 8.)

for willingly he went after the mandate, and I was to Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness,

14. And Ephraim saw his sickness and Judah his wound, and Ephraim went to Assyria, and [*Judah*][4] sent to king Jareb; but he is not able to heal you, neither unbindeth from you your wound.

15. For I am as a lion to Ephraim, and as a young lion to the house of Judah; I, even I, will tear, and will go away; I will carry off, and there shall be none to rescue.

V.

1. [5]*Yea* I will go and return to my place, until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face; *till* in their affliction they seek me early,

2. *Saying,* Come and let us return unto the ETERNAL, for he tore, and he will heal us; he smote, and he will bind us up;

3. He will revive us after two days, on the third day

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[4] *Judah* is understood as sending to King Jareb: and perhaps ought to be expressed.

[5] The division of the chapters here greatly needed amendment; and also that of the verses; though it may be doubted if, in verse 3, the apparent rhythm has led me rightly against the Masoretic punctuation. But most readers will see the continuous flow, I trust, here more easily than in the A. V.

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15. But when God wounds, what earthly power shall bind up?

1. Men will find at length that God is the only true Healer,

2, 3. And in their affliction they will say pleasant

he will lift us up, that we may live before his face and know [*him*] ; that we may continue to know the ETERNAL like the morning settled in its going forth, and that he may come to us like the rain, *and,* like the spring rain, water the earth.[6]

4. Ah, what shall I do unto thee, Ephraim ; what shall I do unto thee, Judah ? for your tenderness is as a cloud of the morning, and as the dew early in the morn it vanishes.

5. Therefore I hewed them by the prophets, I slew them by the words of my mouth, and thy judgments were *as* light *that* goeth forth : for I DESIRED KINDNESS AND NOT SACRIFICE, AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD MORE THAN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS.

[6] *Water the earth*—or, which waters the earth.

things of the Divine mercy, comparing it to the dew and the light of dawn, and expecting recovery from Him, in a very short time, as in two or three days, according to the Hebrew manner of speaking, which describes past time as "*yesterday and the day before,*" and future time as "*the second day and third day.*" Compare 1 Samuel xx. 12, and Joshua i. 11, ii. 22, iii. 4.

4. Alas ! how can God's goodness abide, when their repentance is so fleeting ? 5. He had plentifully taught them, and Hosea expresses God's true teachings in the eternal oracle of genuine religion against formalism, which Christ by twice quoting it has made characteristic of his faith as conceived in his own mind, though not as enforced by his loudest followers. Bishop Butler well saw the pregnancy of this text. God asks for duty in deeds, and men bring him worship in rites. He says, "Whoso walketh uprightly he honoureth me," and men think to honour Him by calumniating whoever worships differently. 6, 7, 8.

6. But they like men[7] [that transgress] transgressed my covenant: there dealt they falsely by me;

7. Gilead is a city of workers of crime, it is tracked with blood;

8. And as troops lie in wait for a man, so the company of priests murder on the way to Shechem,[8] for they contrive the deed.

9. I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel; there is hiring for Ephraim; Israel is defiled; also Judah, there is set a harvest for thee.[9]

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[7] *Like men* that transgress—or, like Adam, which, if so understood, would be a solitary allusion in the Old Testament to the narrative of the "Fall of Man," for Eccl. vii. 29, is but a general reflexion as of a poet or moralist. Or possibly, like Admah, one of the five perished cities of the plain: but most naturally, like men; understanding from the subsequent verb *transgressed* a relative description of the kind of men. The word שָׁם, *there*, seems curiously to look forward to Gilead.

[8] Ramoth in Gilead, and Shechem were Levitical cities of refuge; and the red-handed murderer left trace of blood in streets in which he was laxly received. See Joshua xx. 7, 8. *Contrived the deed.* Hebr. wrought the contrivance, *i.e.* they are doers in effect of what they design, or connive at; but the sense may be general, "they have wrought cunning crime."

[9] *Set*, in Hebrew an active verb, but with impersonal nominative understood.

The Levitical cities, intended like the old asylums of the Gentile world, and like the sanctuaries of the middle ages, to be refuges against hasty wrath, instead of giving vengeance time to become just, degenerated into encouragements to homicide.

9. Religion becoming superior to law was no sacred substitute for it, and the priests profited by setting aside the judges. While the philosopher traces here an argument against the sacerdotal organisation of states, the simpler Prophet's mind is shocked with the prostitution of religion. Also he begins to fear that Judah may need to share the judgment of Ephraim.

VI.

1. [1]When I would have turned the captivity of my people, when I would have healed Israel, then the wickedness of Ephraim was discovered, and the crimes of Samaria;

2. For they work falsehood, and thief entereth within, and troop plundereth without.

3. And they say not to their heart, that I remember all their wickedness; now have their own doings beset them about; they are before my face.

4. They gladden the king with their wickedness, and princes with their fawning.

5. All of them are adulterous, as it were a furnace burning from the baker, *which one* ceaseth from stoking, from the kneading of the dough until its leavening;

6. On the day of our king, the princes sickened[2] (*him*)

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[1] This is a case, in which the chapters were very wrongly divided.

[2] *Sickened him*, or themselves: or began to be inflamed. Minute variation, hardly reaching to the idea, are possible throughout vv. 5, 6, 7, 8. Thus "ceaseth from stoking," may be read so as to mean, *the stoker ceaseth from kneading*.

1, 2, 3. Suppose God willing to heal wicked men, their wickedness provokes him afresh. Not the Assyrians Pul and Tiglath-pileser (though some take it so), but the Hebrews themselves sin and sacrifice, and think that the God of justice has no eye for their deeds.

4—8. They fawn in turn upon a succession of usurpers, knowing no test of right, but might. Every fresh day ministers fresh fuel to some vice. Their disgusting revelry ends in treachery, and as the kings drink themselves

with heat from wine; he stretched forth his hand with jesters;

7. Surely they brought close their heart, like a furnace in their plotting; *though* all the night their baker may sleep, in the morning it burns as a flaming fire:

8. *So* are all of them heated as a furnace, and they devour their judges: all their kings are fallen; there was not among them one that called upon me.

9. Ephraim, he mingleth himself among the nations; Ephraim is as a cake that hath not been turned.

10. Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knows it not; yea grayness is sprinkled upon him, and he knows it not.

11. But the pride of Israel answers to his face,[3] and they turn not back to the ETERNAL their God, neither seek Him, for all this.

12. But Ephraim is as a silly dove, that hath no heart; they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.[4]

13. Even as they go, spread I my net upon them: I

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[3] *The pride of Israel answers, &c.* Vulg. *Humiliabitur* superbia Israel—but see above, Note on iv. 6, and Amos, vi. 8.

[4] These verses should be compared with iv. 13, 14.

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drunk with wine, their captains conspire against them. (Comp. 2 Kings xv.)

9—12. The degenerate kingdom, as Claudian said of Rome, betrays weakness and grey hairs, but while its pomp of revelry and occasional alliances last, flatters itself that either Egypt or Assyria will preserve it.

13—14. What are their plottings, but nets in which Providence captures them? Woe to them! cries the

bring them down as the birds of heaven; I chasten them according to the hearing of their congregation.

14. Woe to them, for they have fled from me! destruction to them, for they have sinned against me; though I redeem[5] them, yet they speak against me falsehood.

15. And they cry not to me in their heart, when they howl upon their beds; they gather themselves[6] in crowds for corn and new wine, and rebel against me.

16. Though I bound and strengthened their arms, yet they imagine harm against me; they return not up:[7] they are like a deceitful bow.

17. Their princes shall fall by the sword; for the foam

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[5] *Redeem*, or deliver, *i.e. Padah*, used in Hebrew in the widest and most natural sense; but now technicalised into a special doctrine.

[6] *They gather themselves, i.e.* יתגררו but a probable reading is, יתגדדו, they cut themselves as frantic devotees. So LXX. *κατετέμνοντο*. Such variations hardly affect the main idea; though a tinge of manners might come in.

[7] *Return, not up, i.e.* like an ill-strung bow, do not recover their straightness. For על, an adverbial root, or preposition, with the sense of on high, up, upon, can neither mean the most High God, nor heavenly things on high; but rather simple elevation, as in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, where David is called the man who was raised on high. I hardly doubt that Hosea wrote ישובו לאול or לאולה, *return to evil;* but (the commoner form being אולת, or some cognate of עול and עולה) the copyists introduced an error which the commentators consecrated. Let the critical reader compare the Hebrew text in Hosea ix. 7; and in Hosea x. 13, with this passage in the LXX. *ἀπεστράφησαν εἰς οὐδέν*. Yet, since the word על has a peculiar usage below (x. 7,) I have accepted the text as it stands, "religionem duxi contra codices quidquam mutare." The Vulgate has, *ut essent absque jugo* —a conjecture, rather than a rendering.

Prophet in a fervour like that of a Turkish dervish. They will hear woe, if they hear not warning.

15—17. Notwithstanding their show of returning to God, they return to evil rather, and know not the Giver for whose gifts they are greedy. So if Egypt saves them

of their tongue, this shall be their mockery in the land of Egypt.

VII.

1. To thy mouth the trumpet, like eagle (crying) against the ETERNAL's household: because they have transgressed my covenant, and offended against my law.

2. They cry unto me, My God, we know thee; *we are* Israel, [the upright with God.]

3. Israel hath rejected good; let the enemy pursue him.

4. They made kings of themselves, and not of me; they set up princes, and I knew nought; their silver and their gold they wrought for themselves into idols, in order that they may be cut off.

5. Thy calf, Samaria, stinketh;[8] my anger burneth against them; how long will they not endure innocence, since [*they are*] of Israel?

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[8] *Thy calf stinketh.* Projectus est vitulus tuus. *Vulg.*; but, ἀπότριψαι τὸν μόσχον σου Σαμ. the Greek, which may be right.

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from Assyria, the rescue will be mingled with bitter contempt.

1—5. What a vain pretence is this, for a people to call itself upright with God, and his household and church, and to expect preservation from Him, while their government is arbitrary and their religion idolatrous! Cry like a bird against them; or, as some, the conqueror like an eagle is already hovering over them. They say, we are Israel, the chosen people, but why is not their life such a one of innocence as God chooses to approve? He abhors such pleas of favouritism, and their bowing down to calves, or outward signs, is an abomination to Him.

6. As for thy calf,[9] a craftsman made it, and it is no god; surely in pieces shall it be broken, O Samaria.

7. Surely they sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind.

8. It has no stalk, its bud yields no meal; or if it yield, strangers swallow it, Israel is swallowed up.

9. Now are they become amongst the nations, as a vessel which one hath no pleasure in; for they went up to Assyria; as a wild ass roaming his own way was Ephraim.

10. They have gotten themselves lovers with gifts; yea, because they spread gifts among the nations, now will I gather them, and they shall grieve soon for the burden of the king of princes.[1]

11. Since Ephraim has made many altars for sinning, altars are counted to him for sins.

12. I wrote[2] for him abundantly my law; my sacrifices,

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[9] *As for thy calf.* Heb. *And He;* with evident reference to the calf just mentioned. *Vulg.* Quia ex Israel et ipse (est). My version departs freely from the punctuation.

[1] *King of princes, i. e.* the king of Assyria; but the Versions read "king and princes;" the Greek κοπάσουσι τοῦ χρίειν seems a misunderstanding of *Massa* burthen, as *Mashach* to anoint.

[2] *I wrote*—Vulg. Scribam, Gr. καταγράψω; yet both follow their imaginary future with a past tense, computatæ sunt, and ἐλογίσθησαν. From such errors spring many prophecies and precepts of Rabbinical Grammar. It is

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6. The only remedy for such idolatrous symbolism is the crash of ruin.

7, 8. Whatsoever man or nation soweth, it shall reap in due time. These men sow destruction.

9, 10. Instead of simple pure worship and trust in an Unseen and Righteous Providence, the Israelites chose gorgeous ritual, and political alliances. So their alliances will soon be a burthen. Their allies become their conquerors. 11. God reckons every idolatrous altar in his honour a fresh sin. 12, 13. Israel had abundant laws, mean-

even my gifts are reckoned as it were a strange thing; they sacrifice flesh, that they may eat.

13. The ETERNAL hath no pleasure in them; now will he remember their iniquity, and will visit their sins; they shall return to Egypt.

14. As Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and built temples,[3] and as Judah has multiplied fortified cities; so will I send fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof.

VIII.

1. Rejoice not, O Israel, for revelling like the nations; because thou hast gone a hiring from thy God.

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more fairly doubtful, whether I am right (punctis deletis) in making *counted* agree with *gifts* and *sacrifices*; but that is easier than to make it agree with the single noun *law*.

[3] *Temples*; or palaces.

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ing those derived by tradition from Moses, though perhaps these contained at first few provisions, and, expanding in the lapse of time, received their fullest expansion, in Deuteronomy, later than our Prophet's age. Enough of those laws then existed to teach the true end and temper of sacrificing. But the idea of giving to God seemed to a rude people something strange; they slew their ox to get a meal of it, as some now make Christmas a time of drunkenness, and others seek physical excitement from fanatical preaching. Let such worshippers go back to Egypt; God neither needs their worship, nor approves its temper.

14. Such a divorce between God and his people is an abandonment which must entail ruin. In the fourteenth verse the ruin is described as in the language of Amos, from whom some think it borrowed either by Hosea or by his editors; but the only evidence for this supposition is the likeness of style.

1, 2. Sensual men may choose to be forgotten of God,

2. Thou hast loved a reward upon every corn-floor;[4] the floor and the wine press shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail therein.

3. They shall not abide in the land of the ETERNAL, but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and they shall eat unholy things in Assyria.

4. They shall not pour out wine to the ETERNAL, neither their sacrifices be pleasant to him; as the bread of mourners shall they be to them;[5] all that eat thereof shall be polluted; since their bread is after their own desire, it shall not come into the house of the ETERNAL.

5. What will ye do against the appointed day; and for the day of festival of the ETERNAL?

6. For behold, they are gone from devastation; Egypt gathers them, Memphis buries them; the pleasant places for their silver,[6] nettles inherit them; briars are in their habitations.

7. Come are the days of visitation, come the days of recompense; *when* Israel shall know, *whether* the prophet

[4] The first clause of verse 2 is usually read in verse 1.

[5] *Vulg.* Omnes qui comedent eum, contaminabuntur: quia panis eorum animæ ipsorum, non intrabit, &c. The punctuation is disputable.

[6] *Pleasant places for their silver.* LXX. Θάψει αὐτοὺς Μαχμάς, adding by mistake a third place to Egypt and Memphis.

if only they are allowed to forget; but sin against light has double penalty. God, who smote ignorant nations with few stripes, will smite those who call themselves the Church of God with many.

3—6. He will not suffer them to dwell on a hallowed soil, with delusive show of religion, which they keep up for their own pleasure; but will leave them as outcasts in some one of the strange lands which they courted.

7—9. The signs of the times are clear, and Israel begins

is foolish and the spiritual man frenzied, [*as thou sayest,*] for the multitude of thine iniquity, and the abundance of thy hatred.

8. *When* the prophet watches[7] for Ephraim with his God, the snare of the fowler is over all his ways, and hatred *for him* in the house of his God.

9. They have corrupted deeply, as in the days of Gibeah; he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins.

10. I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as ripe fruit in the fig-tree in its prime; *but* they went to Baal-Peor, and dedicated themselves to shame, and according to their love[8] were *their* abominations.

11. Ephraim (fruitful tribe), as a bird flitteth, so flitteth

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[7] *When the prophet watches, &c.*; or, when Ephraim watches, the Prophet is a snare; *i. e.* supposing false prophets ensnaring, instead of true ones ridiculed.

[8] *Their love*; or, elliptically, 'My love for them'; *i. e.* they turned God's grace into sin.

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to know (either how frantic were the encouragements of venal prophets; or better,) how wrongly she despised the warnings of true teachers, calling them mad, as the later Jews said the Baptist had an evil spirit, and called Jesus a worker by evil powers. Hitherto the faithful warner has had traps set for him. Bloodshed has been as cruel as when the tribe of Benjamin was defeated, Judges xx. 10—35, or as when Saul smote the Philistines in Gibeah, 1 Samuel xiv. 16.

10—14. Though a righteous Providence watched over the youth of the nation, sins of shame and wantonness have forfeited the blessing. The license sanctioned locally by Baal-Peor (the lord of mount Peor?) in Midian, and by Ashtaroth elsewhere, has been the bane of fruitfulness,

their glory from childbirth, and from womb, and from conception.

12. Yea, if they rear sons great, yet will I bereave them from manhood; yea, woe to them when I turn away from them.[9]

13. Even as I have seen Ephraim (fruitful tribe) planted for a fortress[1] in a pleasant place, so is Ephraim doomed to bring forth his sons to the slayer.

14. *Rather* grant them, JEHOVAH, what canst thou grant? grant them a miscarrying womb, and drying breasts?

15. All their wickedness is in Gilgal, for there have I hated them; for the evil of their doings I will drive them from my house, I will love them no more; all their princes are rebellious.

16. Ephraim is smitten; their root is withered, they shall bear no fruit; yea, though they have children, then will I slay the darlings of their womb.

17. My God shall reject[2] them, because they hearkened

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[9] *On my turning.* LXX. wrongly, σάρξ μου.

[1] *Planted for a fortress.* Vulg. Ephraim, ut vidi, Tyrus erat fundata in pulchritudine. Gr. εἰς θήραν.

[2] *Shall reject.* Heb. fut. of *Maas*, the original word for reprobation; here, as commonly, used for rejection after trial. Comp. Pearson, Opuscula. Lect. xxiii.

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and lessens the numbers of the fruitful tribe, meriting a curse upon its children. The bloody Assyrian's sword works stern retribution for such sins. Blessed in such days of slaughter are the breasts that give no suck, and mothers that look not on the slaughter of their babes.

15—17. Gilgal, the place of ancient consecration by circumcision (Joshua v.) and sacrifice (1 Samuel xi.) has become idolatrous. Since Israel is no better in life than the Heathen, it is no dearer to God. (Comp. Romans ii. 14.)

not unto him; and they shall be wanderers among the nations.

IX.

1. Israel is a branching vine, that layeth his fruit in rows; according to the multitude of his fruit he has multiplied altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images.[3]

2. Their heart is slippery; now they shall be found guilty: He will shatter their altars, and destroy their images.

3. For now they say, We have no king; for we fear not the ETERNAL, and what can the king do for us?

4. They spake words, swearing falsely, in striking a league; so springeth up judgment, as hemlock [springeth] on the furrows of the field.

5. For the calves of Beth-aven[4] tremble the dwellers of Samaria; for his people mourns over him, and his diviners[5] dance over him, for his glory, because it is departed from him.

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[3] *Images.* Gr. στήλας.

[4] *The calves of Beth-aven, &c., τῷ μόσχῳ τοῦ οἴκου Ὢν παροικήσουσιν οἱ κατοικοῦντες Σαμάρειαν.* The frequent introduction of *On* in the LXX. seems probably to be a sign of Egyptian associations. Beth-aven is an ignominious name for Bethel, or for a temple and place near it.

[5] *Diviners.* Heb. *Cemarim*, always in a bad sense, though in Syriac, a general word for priests; whether an exotic term, or from *Camor* to be black.

Since the people share Gentile manners, let them share Gentile destiny.

1—10. The Prophet continues mourning over the unthankfulness of Israel and its consequent judgment. Lawlessness, disloyalty, conspiracy, idolatry, strike him with

6. Of him also to Assyria shall be carrying away, a present to king Jareb, that confusion[4] may seize Ephraim, and Israel be ashamed of his counsel.

7. Samaria is ruined; her king as a bubble[5] on the face of the waters;

8. And the high places of Bethaven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed; bramble and thistle shall go up upon their altars, and they shall say to the mountains, Cover us, and to the hills, Fall upon us, because of the days of Gibeah.[6]

9. The sin[7] of Israel stood there; shall not on Gibeah overtake them war on the sons of iniquity when I desire it?

10. And when I correct them, the nations[8] shall be

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[4] *Of him*, (*i.e.* the calf-idol) shall be carrying—a construction like the Latin "pœnas timendum est." *Confusion*, the Hebrew *Boshenah*, though anomalous, is interpreted by the root *boush* בּוֹשׁ to be abashed, and by the parallel in the next clause.

[5] *Bubble*, or a broken twig.

[6] *Because of the days of Gibeah.* These words, though pointed into the next verse by Hebrew editors, seem to mean the massacre from which refuge was sought in caves.

[7] This verse is explained by the preceding; the word חַטֹּאת, though differently pointed by error, being the same word in both; perhaps a plural in both, and meaning the idol altars.

[8] *Correct*, or *gather* them, according as the Israelites are the subject, or the nations gathered against them.

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grief, and the destruction of places polluted by idolatry, with a captivity of the idols, seem to him inevitable. King Jareb, a striving king, whether Sennacherib, or some other, once an ally, appears as a desolator. Bethel, once house of God, (call it rather now, from a neighbouring seat of idolatry to the East, which Hosea seems to identify with it, Bethaven, house of iniquity,) and Gibeah, a place inauspicious from ancient massacre, see the nations gathered to lay waste.

gathered against them; when I correct them for their double sin.

11. *Then shall* Ephraim *be* a tamed heifer, that loveth to tread out the corn; and I will yoke across the beauty of her neck; I will teach Ephraim riding; Judah shall plough, and Jacob harrow.

12. Sow for yourselves to righteousness, reap to the measure of kindness; cleanse for yourselves clean soil; and [*watch*] the time for seeking the ETERNAL, until he come and rain[9] down righteousness for you.

13. While you have plowed wickedness, you have reaped iniquity; you have eaten the fruits of lying.[1]

14. Because thou hast trusted in thine own way, in the multitude of thy mighty men, therefore riseth tumult amongst thy peoples, and all thy fortresses shall be destroyed; 15. According to Shalman's destruction of Beth-arbel, in the day of battle, when mother was dashed in pieces upon children;[2]

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[9] *Rain*, or teach, see Joel iii. 7, with the note there; and Hosea, above, ii. 13, 14.

[1] The change of number, and the rhythmical sequence of thought require a new division of these two verses; though vv. 14, 15, hardly admit of being entirely divided.

[2] *Shalman's destruction of Beth-arbel*, a fortress in Galilee, (also one beyond Jordan near Pella,) may be placed in king Hosea's reign, and is an important element in determining our Prophet's date. Jerome's turning Shalman into Zalmunnah, and Beth-arbel into the house of Baal, destroyed by Gideon,

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11—13. For a moment the Prophet turns to a strain of hope and exhortation that, with suffering, repentance may merit forgiveness, and the prayer of contrition win blessing.

14—16. But the hardness of men's hearts, on which judgment has plowed in vain, promises no wholesome harvest. Shalman's destruction of Beth-arbel, a little

16. So shall be done unto you,[3] Beth-el, (house of God), for your exceeding wickedness; in early dawn the king of Israel shall be utterly cut off.

X.

1. When Israel was young, then I loved him, and called him out of Egypt to be my son.

2. As they called to them, they went from before them, that they might sacrifice to lords, [Baalim,] and burn incense to images.

3. Though I taught Ephraim to walk, (taking them upon his arms,)[4] yet they knew not that I healed them.

(though followed by eminent scholars) is one of the traditional errors, which arise from twisting Biblical allusions into forced harmony with what has happened to be mentioned in the Bible. Whereas so brief a history omits many things, or only hints at their occurrence.

[3] *Thus shall be done.* Supposing the verb עשה pointed correctly, (which may be doubted) it is an impersonal past, becoming predictive by rapidity; or even describing what the Prophet saw beginning. Bethel, or Bethaven, including its inhabitants and worshippers.

[4] *Taking them upon his arms.* Vulg. *portabam eos in brachiis meis,* (upon my arms) which I should have followed, (altering the pronominal affix of

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Galilean fort amidst the hills near Gennesareth (nothing to do with Zalmunnah) gives a sad presage for Samaria's greater fall.

1, 2, 3. How unlike this fallen state to Jehovah's ancient love, when he said to Pharaoh, "Israel is my first-born," Exodus iv. 22, though Israel had ever been ready to obey the first invitation to stray. 4. In vain the Eternal Being, who in his spiritual infinity transcends the measure of human conception, spoke in forms of human understanding, by uttering reason, and binding with affection, and making man his pensioner, as the helpless brute creatures depend on the hand that feeds them.

4. With cords of a man I drew them, *even* with bonds of love; and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke upon *creatures'* jaws, and I stretched to him food.

5. *Shall he* not go back into the land of Egypt, *or else* the Assyrian be his king ?[5] since they have refused to come back [*to me.*]

6. Yea, the sword shall sicken in his cities, and consume his branches, and devour, because of their counsels.

7. And my people are bent upon going back from me, and though one[6] calleth him upwards, altogether he lifteth him not up.

8. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ? how shall I

זְרוֹעֹתָי as זְרוֹעֹתָיו) if I had not believed the three words to be an old explanatory gloss on the rare phrase תְּרֻגַּלְתִּי. Cases frequently arise for doubt, whether the slightest change of letter (as ו for י) has confused the affixes, or whether the abrupt Hebrew temperament disdained regularity in its use of pronouns. So above in v. 2.

[5] I take this לֹא interrogatively, as הֲלֹא. Some omit it.

[6] *Though one calleth him upward.* LXX. *Καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ἐπὶ τὰ τίμια αὐτοῦ θυμωθήσεται. Vulg.* jugum autem imponetur eis simul. Both Versions imply different readings of the Hebrew. Here, as above, vi. 16, I have translated what can hardly be genuine; but the way to restoration of the text is not nearly so clear here as in vi. 16. The Vulgate follows the same clue in both places, reading עול for על.

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5. Since they will not return to Jehovah, they must return to bondage in Egypt or Assyria. But the Hebrew here says, *"he shall not return,"* as if the Israelites wished to return, and the Prophet forbade it. This might be intelligible, if it stood alone, but on comparison with passages above, (particularly viii. 3. [A. V. ix. 3.] and vii. 13,) the best remedy seems to read the negative interrogatively, as perhaps is right in other passages, though not without dispute.

6, 7 The sickness of the people, as of a languishing beast, sick and rebellious under the yoke, is described.

surrender thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah, *and* set thee as Zeboim? my heart is turned upon me, my relentings altogether are kindled.

9. I will not work the fierceness of my anger; I will not turn back to destroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not man; in the midst of thee a Holy One, and I come not in wrath.[7]

10. Let them go after the ETERNAL, until he roar as a lion; when he roars, then shall men flutter from the West; 11. yea flutter like a bird from Egypt, and like a dove from the land of Assyria, and I will cause them to dwell upon their own homes, is the saying of the ETERNAL.

12. The Ephraimites have encompassed me with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit; yet Judah still rule *thou* with God,[8] and *thou* people of saints *be* faithful.

[7] *In wrath.* Or, in the city; as most vv.

[8] *Yet Judah, still rule thou, &c. Vulg.* Judas autem testis descendit cum Deo, et cum sanctis fidelis. LXX. λαὸς ἅγιος κεκλήσεται Θεοῦ. Michälis and Newcome follow the Greek and Syriac in reading עַם a people, for עִם

8, 9. Still the Prophet, unable to conceive of his people as blotted out, like the five guilty cities of the plain for their unnatural crimes, imagines the heart of God as returning upon His own counsels and relenting. Must not He, in whose infinite compassion all our little tenderness has its rise, be more ready to relent than man? But alas! this was not the place to speak of the order of wisdom and majesty, which makes the path of God's love lie often through destruction.

10, 11. Even now repentance might wake the slumbering strength of God into passionate vigilance over his people, and they might return from the exile imminent if not begun.

12, 13. However fruitless may be pleading with

13. Ephraim maketh the wind his pasture, and pursueth the east wind; all the day he multiplies falsehood and destruction; then they strike a league with Assyria, and oil is carried into Egypt.

XI.

1. The ETERNAL hath also a strife with Judah, and is about to visit upon Jacob according to his ways; according to his deeds will he requite him.

2. In the womb he wrestled with his brother, and in his affliction prevailed with God; yea, he prevailed with the angel and conquered, when he wept and made supplication to him.

3. In Bethel he found him, and there he spake with us, even[9] Jehovah the God of hosts, whose memorial is the ETERNAL.

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with. Horsley somewhat pitifully, "Judah shall yet obtain dominion with God, and shall be established with the Holy Ones;" *i.e.* as he explains, the Holy Trinity. My version follows the Hebrew text, but with such change of points as the sentiment suggested, though the indicative may be retained, while the sense *people* is preferred.

[9] *Even;* or And. Valdè suspicor *Vau* supervacaneum ex antecedente literâ in textum irrepsisse.

Ephraim, the Prophet desires to hope better of Judah. As to the Ten tribes, they have chosen their part, alliances as barren as the wind.

1. Alas! a nearer view of Judah shews that all the descendants of Jacob, in Zion, as in Samaria, provoke judgment.

2. How unlike the early devotion, and fervent faith of the pilgrim patriarch their father!

3—12. From the strong prayer amidst the stones at Bethel, where the eternal pathway between heaven and

4. And thou, *if* thou wilt return by thy God, keep mercy and judgment, and wait upon thy God constantly.

5. Canaan[1] has in his hand balances of deceit, he loveth to oppress.

6. So Ephraim said, Surely I am become rich, I have procured myself substance: all my labours shall not procure me iniquity that were sin.

7. But I, the ETERNAL, thy God from the land of Egypt, will yet make thee a dweller in tents,

8. As in the days of the assembly, when I spake to the prophets, and I multiplied visions,[2] and by the hand of the prophets used similitudes;

9. [3]*If* with Gilead is guiltiness, surely they become naught; *as* in Gilgal they sacrifice bullocks, their altars [abolished] shall be as stoneheaps on the furrows of the field.

10. So Jacob fled into the field of Aram,[4] and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept *sheep;*

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[1] *Canaan;* or a merchant. LXX. Χαναάν, Vulg. Chanaan. There is no reason for deserting the most obvious sense.

[2] *Spoke and multiplied.* LXX, without reason changing the tense, λαλήσω καὶ ἐπληθυνα. Vulg. more faithfully, locutus sum et multiplicavi.

[3] *If.* Vulg. Si. Gr. εἰ. It has to be supplied in the Hebr.

[4] *Aram.* Syria, or the Highland. It is disputed, whether the words Aram and Canaan had originally any other meaning than the highland and lowland of the Semitic area.

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earth was opened in vision, and from the wrestling of supplication at Peniel, what moral degeneracy amidst the wealthy traffic adopted in Canaan! and what a cry to God may not the Prophet raise, for a restoration of the old simple tent-life, when it seemed natural to men, that God should raise up speakers of his will, and quicken their

11. And by prophets[5] the ETERNAL brought up his Israel out of Egypt, and by prophets he was preserved;

12. Ephraim has provoked him with bitterness; so his blood shall be left upon him, and the Lord will requite him his reproach,

13. On Ephraim's speaking horribly,[6] He spared Israel; but he became guilty in Baal, and died.

14. And now they go on sinning, and they make themselves a molten image of their silver, idols after their understanding; the work of the craftsmen all of it: to them they say, Let the sacrificers of man[7] worship the calves.

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[5] *Prophets.* Hebr. sing.

[6] *Speaking horribly.* The radical idea of the word *Retheth* seems terror; whether that which Ephraim felt for God, as A. V. and Pocock; or which he inspired as ruler of the Northern realm, as Kimchi; or better, that which came of his sin under Jeroboam, as Rosenmüller and others. We may then take *Nasa*, not quite grammatically, for ruling as a prince: or better, for bearing sin, or becoming sinful; but better still, as it seems to me, for Jehovah's *bearing*, sparing, or taking away the sin by forgiveness, until it was aggravated by a greater in Baal.

[7] *Sacrificers of man.* So the Hebrew. So the Greek θύσατε ἀνθρωπούς; and less clearly the Latin, Immolate homines vitulos adorantes. The A. V. "men that sacrifice" implies a repugnance to the idea of human sacrifice in Israel; of which, however, we have traces in David's hanging Saul's seven sons before the Lord; Jephthah's daughter; Abraham's temptation; as well as in the customs of kindred races, the king of Moab's son, the Phœnician usage, and that of the earliest Greeks. The glory of Israel is to have outgrown rude awe; training it into moral reverence; though hardening that into formal literalism.

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spiritual life by fervent preachers! In those days of prophets Israel dwelt safely: under her kings she sins and suffers.

13—15. God spared the Ten tribes, notwithstanding that Jeroboam the son of Nebat made them sin. Now, since idolatry multiplies, since Baal is worshipped, and perhaps even human blood shed, either to Moloch, or

15. Therefore shall they be as a morning's cloud, and as the dew that cometh early and vanisheth, as the chaff that is whirled out of the garner, and as the smoke from the chimney.

XII.

1. Yet I the ETERNAL am thy God from the land of Egypt, and God beside me thou shalt not know, and Saviour there is none except me.

2. I knew thee in the wilderness, in the land of thirst.

3. According to my pasturing them, so that they were filled, they became full, and their heart was exalted, therefore they forgat me.

4. So will I be to them as a lion; as a leopard upon the way to Assyria ;[8] I will meet them as a bear bereaved, and I will rend the caul of their heart, and I will devour them there as a great lion; the wild creature of the field shall tear them.

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[8] *To Assyria.* Or, I will lie in wait; as the A. V. 'I will observe,' properly following the Masoretic points; but the versions, Gr. and Lat. (in viâ Assyriorum) represent a still older tradition, and suit the context.

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through contagion of Moloch-worship, notwithstanding Abraham's purer faith had sought better propitiations, the nation drifts like chaff, stubble, smoke.

1, 2. Once more the poem, before it ends, expresses a last appeal to the pious recollections of the people, and reminds them of a true and ever-living God.

3—7. As they had sinned, so God must smite. He will not bless the flight to strange lands. He has not blessed their usurping kings.

5. Thou hast destroyed thyself,[9] Israel; for in me [*thou wouldst be*] by thy help.

6. Where is[1] thy king gone? and *where* one that can save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes.

7. I give thee kings[2] in my anger, and take *them* away in my wrath.

8. The iniquity of Ephraim is bound close, his iniquity is treasured: 9. the pangs of travailing come upon him; he is an unwise son; for it were time he should not stand still in the breaking forth of children;

10. *When* from the hand of the grave I was delivering them, and from death redeeming them; [*when I said,*] Death, where are[3] thy plagues, Grave, where is thy destruction?

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[9] *Thou hast destroyed thyself;* lit. It is thy destruction. The text is elliptically brief.

[1] *Where is.* Or, I will be; see note on v. 10.

[2] *Kings.* Hebr. sing.

[3] *Where are.* Or, I will be. See above v. 6, and the Introduction to Hosea. LXX. ποῦ ἡ δίκη σου, θάνατε; ποῦ τὸ κέντρον σου ᾅδη; Vulg. Ero mors tua, O mors: morsus tuus ero, inferne; consolatio abscondita est ab oculis meis. According to Jarchi and Kimchi, the meaning is, "my word to thee Israel shall now be death,"—a strained interpretation, but argumentatively conceived after the context.

8—12. All the appeals are in vain. Stolid and obstinate, the nation which God called to for a new birth of a pious generation, and for new thoughts and hopes, stands gazing on its idols. God would have saved them from the Assyrian sword, and would have foiled the besieger, and bidden death and the grave stay their devouring.

Since sinners do not repent, God cannot relent.

The invader from the North, like the storm from the desert, blasts the fruitfulness of the fruitful tribe, and

11. Repentance is hidden from my eyes; though he be the fruitful tribe among his brethren, an east wind cometh, the blast of the ETERNAL coming up from the desert, so that his spring be parched, and his fountain become drought; it shall spoil the treasure of all vessels of desire.

12. Samaria shall become desolate,[4] because she hath rebelled against her God; they shall fall by the sword; their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up.

13. Return, O Israel, to the ETERNAL thy God; for thou art fallen by thine iniquity.

14. Take with you words, and return to the ETERNAL, say to Him, Put away all our sin, and receive us favourably; so will we render fruit from our lips.[5]

[4] *Desolate*, as A. V. or Guilty.

[5] *Fruit from our lips.* LXX. *κάρπον χειλέων ἡμῶν.* So Heb. xiii. 15, 'the sacrifice of praise, that is the fruit of our lips.' Both follow the most grammatical form of the Hebrew text; though the error, *oxen*, if it be such, is as old as Jerome, who gives *vitulos labiorum*; and in this has been found, not I think probably, an allusion to the calves of Samaria. Newcome, Mede, Le Clerc, read fruit.

Samaria becomes desert as a well parched by drought. The siege, now in progress, can only have the end which obstinacy and unrepentance bring on resistance to an overwhelming force.

13—21. So the admonition of Hosea has ended, and the note of destruction sounded. It only remains to look for a remnant out of the fallen nation, which by repentance and faithfulness may plead with God, for their own rescue, if not for the nation's restoration.

Hope, unwilling to be quenched in the pious patriot's breast, suggests words of returning to God, the relinquishment of human politics, and reliance on His faithfulness. To such a remnant, be it small or great, the everlasting mercy of God offers out of the jaws of ruin, as out of death

15. Assyria shall not be our Saviour; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, *Hail,* our Gods; for in thee the fatherless findeth pity;

16. *So* will I heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for my anger is turned away from him;

17. I will be as the dew to Israel; he shall burst forth as the lily,[6] and strike his roots like Lebanon;

18. His suckers shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon;

19. The dwellers under his shadow shall return; they shall revive the corn, and be fruitful as a vine whose renown is as the wine of Lebanon;

20. Fruitful tribe, what have I any more with idols? I humbled, and I will lift him[7] upright like a luxuriant cypress, from me is thy fruit gained.

21. Who *is* wise, to understand these things? *Who is* prudent, to know them? for the ways of the ETERNAL are upright, and the righteous will walk in them; but sinners will stumble therein.

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[6] *Lily.* Hebr. *Shusannah.* A bright or six-leaved flower. Gr. *κρίνον.* Lat. lilium. Compared in Song of Sol. v. 13, to the lips; hence taken as red—"rubens lilium" of Pliny. If not an exotic term, derived from *Shush,* to be bright.

[7] *Will lift him upright*—in the sense of *Yashar,* as the context suggests. But if more regularly from *Shur,* "*I will observe him.*" So A. V. 'have observed'—Newcome, 'have seen'; but Gr. *κατισχύσω.* Vulg. Dirigam—the last, I think, rightly.

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and the grave, the possibility of return to Him, who is not afar from any one of us. If there are any that will understand, let them not charge their Maker with folly. He has dealt justly by sinful Israel, and will deal mercifully with all men repentant. Only sinners and their sin cannot stand in His ways, which are righteousness and truth.

INTRODUCTION TO MICAH.

Of the two contemporary Prophets, Isaiah and Micah, Isaiah would deserve the first place by priority of commencement; while the later date to which his works extend, and the multifariousness of their subject matter, render it natural to place him second. I judged that Micah would be conveniently read first, because he most resembles the smaller Prophets which have been given in order of time, and in his work their works appear to find completion; although we have hardly such certainty of dates as to be able to say, that in him is fulfilled as description, what in them had been sketched as foreboding.

During the hard three years of Samaria's siege by Shalmaneser, in the reign of Hosea, B.C. 724 to B.C. 721, (or according to another chronology 711 to 709), anxiety must have reigned at Jerusalem. Light-armed marauders, whether horse or foot, may have swept the country to the gate of the city. It would be strange, if the smaller towns did not suffer at least in their suburbs from incursions. Within twenty years, the young king's father, and now but recently defunct king, Ahaz, had pacified Tiglath-pileser, and welcomed him at Damascus as a deliverer from the league of Syria and Samaria. Yet five years hardly elapsed from Samaria's fall, before Sennacherib appears laying waste the cities of Judah. Comp. Isaiah vii. viii. with 2 Kings xvi. xviii. Whether this invasion was gratuitous, or provoked by the defiance with which Hezekiah seems to have begun his reign, it might be foreseen by observers, and (as the mention of Lachish will suggest, 2 Kings

xviii. 14, Micah i. 13,) the recollection of it may tinge a subsequent record. When the news came that the breaker had gone up through walls and gate, and the foundations of Omri's city had been laid bare, the next question for all men's hearts would turn on the fate of Jerusalem. The timid would counsel timely submission, and care little, if the pattern of Assyrian altars accompanied peace. The more fervent and less questioning faith, which, not to use the word offensively, might border on fanaticism, would see no impossibility in repelling the hosts of Assyria, provided the city which they fondly deemed the favourite of Heaven were restored to its sanctity, and policy exchanged for reliance on an Almighty ally. All the analogies of history suggest that on these questions the Prophets, like other men, would be divided; and the express affirmations of Scripture assure us that they were so. Nothing has been better established on scriptural grounds, than that the policy of Hezekiah, as of subsequent kings, varied according to the varying estimation in which particular counsellors were held. Even Samaria must have had, up to the last moment, successors of Zedekiah son of Chenaanah to encourage resistance; hardly perhaps a Jeremiah to dissuade it. Jerusalem, though her king could not equip two thousand horsemen, had fairer prospects of resistance; she had seen Pekah and Rezin fail in their aggression; she was destined, some ten or twelve years hence, to profit by the disaster which befell Sennacherib's army in the desert; already she had on the throne a young prince, sprung from the ancient line of David at Bethlehem, who, if his faith in Jehovah equalled that of his ancestors, might recover their entire kingdom, and not weakly throw away its remnant. What, then, if the destruction of Samaria, instead of being a calamity to Israel, should turn out the means of its reunion, with Jerusalem as its capital?

Not that the counsels of politicians, or of such advisers as had assured Samaria the evil day would never come, could avail to good. If such men prevailed, they would ruin Jerusalem. Possibly they might; yet a brighter future would supervene, when their counsels had run their course; the old promise to the line of the shepherd of Bethlehem was not exhausted: Jehovah would not give Jerusalem the faithful city, though he had given the faithless Samaria, to the Assyrian.

If such is, as it appears, a tolerable conception of the struggles and aspirations which agitated the prophetic or popular mind in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, in the period between Samaria's fall and Sennacherib's disaster, (whether from B.C. 721 to 711, or 709 to 689,) our next business is to examine more nearly, whether their reflexion in the book of Micah is distinct enough for the Prophet and his period to be set down as mutually corresponding.

The titular superscription, for which we are indebted to some unknown Rabbinical editor, makes Micah, (more fully Micaiah,) a native of Maresha a city near Eleutheropolis, or of Moresheth, a village belonging to Gath; but also near Eleutheropolis, so that the variation of name need not preclude identity of site. Comp. Robinson's Palestine, vol. ii. pp. 422, 423. Jerome believed the Prophet's tomb to be at Morasthi, *i.e.* Moresheth. The superscription proceeds to make Micah preach in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The far higher authority of the Prophet Jeremiah, (xxvi. 18) places him definitely under Hezekiah, within whose reign fall the various occurrences which we shall find the book dwell upon as contemporaneous.

The first chapter commences with the word, or counsel, of Jehovah as the unseen cause of visible events, and describes first the fall of Samaria, then the march of the enemy, or the progress of alarm, through the cities of Judah to the

gate of Jerusalem. Our western ears require indulgence for the alliteration of word-play which pervades the description. The unfortunate loss of nearly all the priestly, as distinct from the secular, literature of ancient Italy may leave it doubtful, whether a Latin or Cisalpine Gaul would have made his Litany run *Capitur Capua, Crematur Cremona;* but such is the distinctive property of Micah's style, which if we forget, we cannot estimate him aright. Whether Lachish was, as is conjectured, one of the cities of the king's chariots, or whether horses were there dedicated to the Sun, it was one of the first places attacked in Sennacherib's invasion, if not before. Either a sense of fitness, or some circumstance which can now only be guessed, made the Prophet conceive of Israel's sin, as her punishment, commencing there. Each place in turn has some word-play on its misfortune.

Even the philosophical historian endeavours to trace events in connexion with their causes. Still more the Hebrew Prophet would see the Divine design in every disaster. The more strongly the Hebrew mind subordinated all things to a Supreme Will, the more naturally it would overlook earthly links, absorbed in mental contemplation of the unseen upholder of the chain. Micah, after his description in the first chapter, proceeds in the second to dilate on the wickedness which provoked the judgment. It seems a mistranslation to find in the eighth verse the cruelty of Judah to Ephraimite fugitives given amongst the causes. My interpretation at least understands the whole of the second chapter as referring to the Ephraimite kingdom. I understand the 12th verse as not a promise of restoration, whether genuine from Micah, or feigned from the contrary prophets, (though both these views have eminent defenders,) but as a threat, or rather a description, of Jehovah's collecting the offenders in the evil day for the

evil which he had devised against the whole family. My reasons lie partly in the connexion of thought; partly in the striking illustration in what our Authorised Version makes the xxxivth chapter of Isaiah, where the sword of Jehovah is described as having its full of massacre of the flocks of Bozrah; to which a parallel may be found in the 68th Psalm. The 13th verse will thus proceed naturally as a description of the fatal breach in Samaria's wall. I anticipate greater doubt from the critical reader, when I proceed to connect closely in the same enunciation the first four verses of the third chapter, and (supported by the Septuagint καὶ ἐρεῖ,) conceive the Prophet to represent no one less than Jehovah himself as dismissing the exiles with a judicial enumeration of the crimes which provoked Him. Before any one blames this innovating construction, let him weigh well the connexion of thought throughout, observing in other cases, how capable the Hebrew Prophets were of continuous unity of thought.

It is manifest that the third chapter, (or the fifth verse of the third, as commonly arranged,) contains vigorous denunciations of the contrary prophets, who (like Amaziah the high-priest of Bethel, and others rebuked by Amos, iv. 7—10, v. 3) put the evil day afar from Samaria, and whose counsels would bring like on Jerusalem. It may be instructive to reflect, in what terms the plain-spoken Prophet would have described the absorption of Church property by Anglican Bishops in the critical reigns of Edward VI., Charles II. and Victoria. Refinement may have carried us too far from truth, in dreading no sin so much as its name. Yet something of personal passion (as we are apt to judge things) appears in the Prophet's contrast of his own better spirit with that which spake on the other side. He is full of power to declare the eternal truths by which nations stand: he traces, as John Baptist after

him traced, the tendency which we call Jewish, though inveterate in religious people everywhere, to rely on name, privilege, nationality, churchmanship, instead of a kindred of spirit to God's will, and obedience of life to His law. The ruin which he anticipates, is either contingent upon the following of evil counsels, or seems conceived as actual, though transient. Neither his country's love, nor his trust in God, would permit the Prophet to paint such ruin as permanent. In a glowing passage, which seems originally distinct, and so far rightly placed as commencing a new chapter, but arranged by Micah himself so as to form a linked paragraph with the context, he proceeds to sketch a happier hereafter. He turns to Migdal-eder and Bethlehem, places associated with the ancient glory of David, for the germ or renewal of the dynasty which by right shall restore Ephraim to Judah according to "the first dominion." Such a restoration he conceives not completed without a spasm as of national childbirth, (that old and frequent figure for deliverance through pain,) and bids the nation travail in sorrow and hope. Though the Assyrian may smite Ephraim's last king on the cheek, some one, such as Hezekiah, (who having but a few years mounted the throne suits the figure admirably,) comes forth from ancient line, restores the remnant of Samaria, and with his associated chiefs avenges Israel on Assyria. Those who have been carried into far lands will assist the conquest, falling with their numbers like thick drops of dew on their tyrants dismayed, or turning on them like the rending lion at bay; such had been the old cognizance of Judah. So instead of Samaria, the old Davidical kingdom, but in more peaceful and priestly style than under Solomon, without horse or chariot, and also without idols or mixed worship, rises before the Prophet's eye; and the hopes which heralded Hezekiah's reign, and which Sennacherib's dis-

aster may have brightened, are expressed with all the glow of patriot song.

So far, that is down to the end of our 4th chapter (5th A. V.) there is no insuperable difficulty for the serious reader of Micah. It may be asked, if the original Prophet did not here end? Assuming the book as it has reached us to be genuine, we may explain the two last chapters thus. As judgments are revoked upon repentance, blessings and deliverances are contingent upon conditions natural, or supernatural. If Samaria was to merge in a restoration of David's kingdom of Judah, the moral conditions of an upright people must be satisfied. While men think offerings of blood and gold appease God, the prophet spirit of Micah saw something deeper required. It is the old controversy, not so much between priest and prophet, as between the formal worshipper and the true seeker after God; Eli's sons and reforming Samuel; if we take the most favourable view, between Saul and Samuel; more clearly between the Levitical spirit and that of the Psalmist, (Psalm 50, etc.); between the Pharisees and the Baptist; the Scribes and Christ; the Mosaic Judaizers and St. Paul. Balaam, in his earlier stage, represents the principle of prayer and sacrifice, without a true conception of the righteous God. When his eyes were opened, he learned that God is not bribed, or mocked. So Micah, using, as is reasonably conjectured, a traditional fragment, in which is embodied the spirit at least of Balaam's opened mind, reminds his contemporaries what is God's righteousness; namely, justice, mercy, and meekness, while he laments their vain hope of justification by costly or burdensome rites. We have the same controversy in our own time; though St. Paul may be quoted on the side which he condemns. If the statutes of Omri are kept, Micah's sense of God's justice forbids him to doubt that, notwithstanding all his

aspirations, the fate of the city of Omri will befall the city of David.

One chapter remains, conceived in a strain of disappointment. Whatever bright hopes gilded the earlier years of Hezekiah's reign, were fulfilled hardly beyond the modest limits of human achievement. A strange or mixed people occupied the cities of Ephraim; though a few Israelites may have fed stray flocks in Gilead or Carmel. God, who is just and merciful, but who owes no man anything, had assigned to the kingdom limits, an extension of which might be won by patriot valour, but was little merited by special goodness, and which it little concerns our faith to desire. So the Prophecy, like human life, subsides in a strain less magnificent than the vision of its commencement. Yet the good Prophet, with the inextinguishable yearning of man's heart, unchastened by that lofty yet profound resignation, which other nations have greatly exemplified, but which we specially associate with Christ's teaching, still aspires to some reversal of the destiny. Man cries; if he would only reform, will not God relent? "Thou wilt perform the kindness to Jacob and the faith-"fulness to Abraham, which thou hast sworn from the "days of old." The vigour of the Hebrew language, animated by Eastern passion, permits the Prophet to express as a future, what we should cast in the form of a prayer. Yet human grief, mixed with patriot anger, and a despairing yet persistent appeal to the God of his fathers, seems the burden of the closing chapter.

Thus Micah's work has an unity throughout consistent with the events of his time, the history of his people, and, if we allow something for the chafing of man's spirit within the limits of a comprehensive system, consistent with the course of the world.

Did this unity enter into the Prophet's conception? Or

is it due to the compiler's arrangement, and the interpreter's art? The answer seems to be, for the first four, if not five, chapters, that the unity springs from the author's mind, though he may have grown into it by degrees, rather than originally designed it.

As the splendid fragment usually termed Messianic, "*It "shall come to pass in the aftertime of days that the moun-"tain of the Eternal's house shall be established,*" c. iii. 9, is older than Micah, and not so much in his style as in that of Joel, (as an acute though sceptical critic has remarked); yet Micah so adopts and weaves it into his context, as to forbid our severing it, we seem justified in conceiving a series of moods and successive images combined by himself into a whole, which is neither single in its conception, nor yet divisible into parts, so much as distinguishable by alternation of impulses. First he describes the ruin; then moralises on its causes; he next forebodes a gloomy future for Jerusalem. Probably this was the first act of the mental drama. His spirit then rises with a reaction of hope, and he bids the travailing nation prepare to repell the Assyrian. This was the second act, possibly the last of Micah's own. A third and a fourth succeed in the book as we now have it, in one of which the Prophet reasons of righteousness, mercy, and meekness; in the last he battles against despondency. Some critics think the coherence of these two last chapters loose enough to justify a suspicion of their belonging to a later, though still sacred Prophet. If it is permitted me in a case where evidence is scanty, to offer a conjecture, I think the language of the last, and only of the last, chapter belongs to a century later than Micah. The termination of words in *Yod*, (call it Paragogic, Archaic, Chaldaic, what you will,) seems to me suspiciously frequent. The tone of sentiment seems to suit the beginning of the Babylonian

Exile, when a little remnant sought insecure refuge under Gedaliah (2 Kings xxv. 24,) better than the hour in which Isaiah defied Sennacherib. If I am asked to prove this, it does not admit of proof. If any one prefers all Micah to be equally ancient, let him so read it. But, since I arrived at my own conclusion, I have had the pleasure of learning that Ewald, a scholar of that stamp whose lightest saying, even when it seems peremptory, is not lightly to be rejected, has changed his earlier belief in the unity of the book, and considers the last two chapters as the work of a later Prophet. Both this opinion, and my own humbler suggestion, may be weighed without prejudice to doctrines, being not dependent on any special theory.

I have reserved for separate treatment the 2nd verse in the 4th chapter, (*Be in pain, &c.*) which is distinguished by its type. How came the Prophet to speak of *Babylon*, the empire of the following century, while he is engaged in anticipating triumph over *Assyria?* No religious mind, least of all my own (whatever may have been polemically imputed,) would dream it impossible for God to foretell the Captivity a century before it happened. That is not the difficulty. But while the Daughter of Zion, that is the Nation impersonate, is about to break forth on her besiegers, and to trample them with brazen hoof and iron horn, having a chieftain who will be her peace against the Assyrian, how came inserted a prediction of the subsequent exile so incongruous as to blot the whole picture, and destroy the sequence of ideas? It has been answered, that Babel, a most ancient name, denoting what just then was an Assyrian province, stands for the empire; or even for Nineveh. This answer, in its most moderate form, proceeds on a forgetfulness that the sons of Zion's daughter, the men of Judah, were not transplanted to Assyria; nor at this time to any other land; besides which, Micah in

the context is not anticipating exile, but triumphant overthrow of the Assyrian. Nor was the triumph which his keen spirit forecasts, of the moderate kind which actually befell the Jews in the decree of Cyrus. I regret to find no outlet from the difficulty, except the suggestion that this verse is one of the signs of fresh editing and arranging, (as Irenæus, C. Hær. iii. 25, says, God inspired Ezra *τοὺς τῶν προγεγονότων προφητῶν πάντας ἀνατάξασθαι λόγους*,) which have been already discussed in the Introduction to Amos. The Editor, (whether Ezra or some associate, such as Haggai or Zechariah,) finding in the older Prophet an address to Zion as encircled by enemies, and travailing with fresh offspring of hope, might think the words applicable in his own time, and point the application by inserting mention of Babylon. To ourselves, in ages when fidelity to text is deemed an editor's most sacred duty, such an insertion would seem unjustifiable; but if we observe the manner of the earliest Targum, (which is called the Chaldee Jonathan, though possibly a recast of the Greek Theodotion,) we find applications and adaptations to new enemies never intended by the original Prophet, (Edom becoming Rome, and the like,) in a style to which such an insertion as is here supposed would be but a modest prelude; while our own devotional and homiletic adaptations are but an extension of the principle handed down to us through ritualists from a long line of Patristic precedent. So much may be said in extenuation of such insertions, that they may have been originally, and in many later instances are, consistent with good faith; although defences or statements of the case respecting them may be found, for which no such apology could be offered.

The suspicion with which I feel myself compelled to regard a single verse (iv. 2,) has been extended by a keen English critic to the passage extending from iii. 4, "*But verily I am full of power by the breath of the Lord,*" to the

end of iv. 5, "*thou vowest their spoil to the Eternal, and their substance to the Lord of the whole earth.*" That is, he suggests that the entire 4th chapter of the A. V. and the five last verses of the 3rd are spurious. So desperate a remedy not only is needless, but seems forbidden by the mention of travail and birth in iv. 7, since the reference there must be to the birth-pangs introduced in the previous passage, the genuineness of which is proved by the connexion. Only the Babylon verse, by disturbing this connexion, proves itself doubtful. On the whole, Micah, possibly not at the first heat, yet Micah wrote to the end of the 4th chapter, while an interpretation has been suggested, on which the 5th, and much less confidently the 6th, may also be ascribed to him.

An immense question, important in its bearing not only on Biblical interpretation, but on our fundamental conception of the Christian religion, first swells to a critical climax in Micah. Those who read in Genesis of the woman's seed bruising the serpent's head, understand most naturally Mankind by the seed, and evil or the tempting adversary by the serpent. So far as this is fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, it is because he most eminently represents Mankind triumphing over evil. A similar construction may explain the 8th Psalm, in which God puts creation under the feet of Man, especially of the best of men, though the intensity with which in the Epistle to the Hebrews this application is limited to Jesus, requires indulgence for the Hermeneutics of an age in which to edify by the use of Scripture was considered identical with interpreting it. The Shiloh of Genesis xlix, meaning the local sanctuary of Ephraim, has been surrendered in its personal reference by candid interpreters. The Prophet, promised in Deuteronomy xviii. 18, is most naturally understood of the long series of Prophets, Samuel, Elijah, Jeremiah, who recalled Israel to the living God—so far as Jesus is the greatest of

Prophets, such a text may be applied to him. When David received from Nathan the Prophet a promise of an abiding dynasty, (2 Sam. vii. 12,) the anticipation of sinfulness in the sons who are to spring from him sufficiently limits the promise to natural and earthly offspring. This promise of 2 Samuel vii. 12—16, is the one referred to by some mourning exile in the 89th Psalm. When we apply this key to the Psalms, we find it impossible to doubt, that David and his sons or successors, his kingdom, and the fortunes of temporal Israel, are the main subjects of those which speak of an unction, actual and with earthly oil among the Israelites, though symbolical of spiritual gifts, lavished elsewhere by God, as by the wind which bloweth where it listeth. In the last verse of the 18th Psalm, the words "David his Anointed" explain themselves. In the 72nd Psalm, a reference to some young Prince, such as Solomon, is conceded by those who have not courage to adopt the same principle elsewhere. In the 2nd, 22nd, and 110th Psalms, mistranslation renders possible the introduction of senses little dreamt of by the original Poet. When we learn in Psalm ii. to translate נַשְּׁקוּ־בַר "worship purely," without fancying that Jerome thought *Adorate filium* "indecent," though idiomatic need of a preposition and distinction between Hebrew and Syriac made him, under good Hebrew guidance, and in opposition to the ignorant Ruffinus, change it into *Adorate purè;* when we suffer the surrounding lions of the Hebrew MSS. in Psalm xxii. 16, to remain uncorrupted by the Septuagint; and when we find the glistening with dew-drops of armed youth, instead of a mystical Nativity, in Psalm 110, we begin to see how insecure a foundation for any faith must be the rhetoric which Messianized so many passages, and how unacceptable to God, (as to men also, when their eyes shall be opened), must be any authoritative misguidance which consecrates such errors.

On passing from the Psalms to the books which custom or principle designates as specially Prophetical, we find more serious reasons to examine on part of the argument that the Prophets predicted Jesus as the Christ. I do not raise the question, whether the same spirit which spake by the Prophets did not express itself eminently in our Lord, nor how far recurrent events by a profound spiritual parallel suggested with justifiable suggestion the adaptation to new things and persons of the sayings of old time; nor yet how far a translation of things temporal into spiritual, as of a kingdom of horse and chariot into one of thought and feeling, or as of Canaan into heaven, and Egypt into mental bondage, and Moabites into spiritual enemies, may involve a natural pleasure in readjusting warlike songs and sayings into a profounder aspiration after a deliverance, and a Deliverer, of the mind from evil —these are not my questions. All these presuppose a spiritual insight of devotion, too fervent to need hermeneutic syllogisms, though capable of innocently enjoying and strengthening itself by introverted adaptations.

What did the Prophets mean? Did they predict a Messiah, one anointed with the Holy Spirit, who should be Priest, Prophet, and King, the glory of Israel, and Saviour of Mankind; suffering, yet triumphant; man in form, God in power. Pearson on the Creed gives the belief of learned tradition. Keith on the Prophecies is a popular recast of it, with which most readers must be familiar. Setting aside profane assumptions that the belief cannot be well founded, and pious assumptions that it must be true because it is received, let us examine the only authorities on the subject, the Hebrew Prophets. If reason does not elicit it from their writings, no external volition can impose it upon them, or their readers.

We have seen, in the Prophets preceding Micah, such glowing anticipations of a brighter future, as fancy loves, and faith in God does not disapprove. These have been connected, as an instinctive sense of God's righteousness would suggest, with requirements of right, mercy, and truth, in thought and deed. We have seen also aspirations of the patriot stamp, earnest enough to take the form of predictions, that Jehovah would have mercy on his people Israel, protect their border, restore their exiles, and transmit their inheritance to their children. These again have been connected with a requirement of national reform, so that the patriot's desire is not unaccompanied by the Prophet's warning. That the children of Abraham cannot perish, yet that God can raise up out of the stones children to Abraham, rather than cherish unworthy favourites, is the burden of alternate verses. In Joel we found chiefly a general vision of a brighter time. In Amos we had more the strong hope of a national resurrection. In Obadiah still the latter, not without a vindictive tinge, preponderates. In Hosea both are variously blended. No one of these Prophets hitherto has presented the picture of a hero deliverer, national or spiritual, such as we conceive the Messiah. Far more truly we may say the conceptions of Hosea were in a strain fundamentally different.

Proceeding to Micah, we still find the general anticipation of good to come, and the national hope, both of which are strikingly combined in the splendid fragment which usually commences the 4th chapter, here placed at iii. 9. The "golden age" of Hesiod and Ovid, the "Islands blest" of heroic minds among Gentile worthies, the contemplation among the gods of Plato, the innumerable assemblage of spirits made perfect in Scipio's dream, may each be considered as finding analogy in this

vision of peaceful prosperity, which, as it floated before Micah's eyes, he fixed in words caught from Joel, or some other old Prophet. The indestructible hope of Man, as a fellow-worker with God, cannot acquiesce in what seems less than his Maker's design—Faith, approving such hope, yet gathering strength from experience, shatters its past images. So to the Christian Fathers, taking Justin Martyr[1] as a specimen, and to the stream of older interpreters, it seemed unimportant whether a few Hebrew tribes were restored to the hills of Judæa, or dwelt elsewhere. Jerome,[2] Augustine,[3] Laud,[4] Warburton, unlike in other things, agreed in this. We have placed our promised land beyond the grave, and think no covenant everlasting[5] of which the guarantee is fleshly, or the promise earthly. Yet, aspiring to a higher inheritance, we must not thrust its proof into Micah, unless we find it there. Considering how the Prophet connects his hopeful fragment with what goes before and after; *i.e.* first with the destruction which bad teachers would bring upon Zion; secondly with the triumph which Zion was to win over Assyrian invaders; we can but trace, so far, a hope of temporal deliverance, and a hope which in some

[1] J. M. Trypho.

[2] Hieron. in Joel c. iii. "Promittunt ergo sibi Judæi; imo somniant, quod in ultimo tempore congregentur a Domino, et reducantur in Hierusalem . . . Hæc illi, et nostri Judaizantes." Similar expressions are used by him almost as often as he touches the topic, generally on the hopeful portion with which the Prophets are apt to close.

[3] Aurel. August. *Doct. Christ.* iii. 34, 'mente non gente distinguitur.' So in the '*De Civitate Dei.*'

[4] Laud's Sermons, London, Rivingtons, 1829: "A most flourishing "nation again in Jerusalem . . . . Good God, what a fine people have we "here! Men in the moon!" p. 17. "I will leave these men to outdream the "Jews." p. 20. Compare the "Christian Year" for 5th Sunday in Lent.

[5] Compare Psalm cv. 10—11, and Genesis xvii. 7—11, with St. Paul, Romans iv. 10, viii. 22; Galat. v. 6, vi. 4, and the writer to the Hebrews, iv. 8, 9.

of its features Providence did not see good to fulfil; since the kingdom of the Ten Tribes did not return to Migdal-eder by Bethlehem, or to Jerusalem. We are now at the heart of the question: for if we connect the Latter-day fragment, as we ought, with the birth from Bethlehem-Ephratah, a few verses lower, it becomes no longer possible to avoid the conclusion, that Micah is speaking of some one being born, or sitting already on Judah's throne, and destined, as he hoped, to consolidate the divided kingdom; certainly he is not speaking of any distant Messiah, earthly or heavenly. This conclusion is in its substance confirmed by scholars, who may seem at variance with it because they retain the word *Messiah* (Anointed), but who understand by that term something widely remote from the conception described by Bishop Pearson. It will result, that we shall be obliged to consider the citation in our first Gospel, ii. 6, as an adaptation of ancient words, instead of an authoritative allegation of prediction; and opinions will differ widely as to the degree of historical justice, or fanciful ornament shewn in the adaptation.

Any reader, who is convinced that in this famous passage of Micah we have no divine prediction of Jesus as the Messiah born in Bethlehem, will be prepared for a similar falling of the scales from his eyes when he examines other passages. If any one thinks, that indifference to sacred things has swayed my interpretation, let him exercise fairness and patience in investigating each step towards the conclusion; and if he then retains the other side, let him freely teach it. If he thinks, as has been curiously said, that a natural, instead of a forced, interpretation of Prophecy paves the way for "Natural Religion," he may please to consider that there can be no worse preparation for acceptance of the true Supernatural,

whether shewn (1) spiritually in Divine influence upon the human mind, or (2) physically in interruption, as is thought, of the order of nature, than a barrier of interpretations, which Scripture and reason unite in condemning. The utmost willingness to believe the New Testament confers no warrant for corrupting the Old. A man may first begin to doubt Christ's healing men's sick bodies of old, and healing sick minds still, when he is forbidden to believe it, unless with a preliminary distortion of the Prophets. If it be said, that the majority of Christians in all ages have held certain interpretations, this is true of men, a majority of whom could not read, while their Bishops could not always write, and far more of them knew nothing of the languages interpreted; but it is equally true, and more pertinent, that wherever the Bible has been opened in light, an opinion has grown steadily among scholars that those interpretations are mistakes; and the persistence against evidence in upholding such as true, is dangerous to many men's religion; perhaps to some men's integrity.

To find many meanings in poetry, to express fresh emotions in familiar words, to trace profound moral parallels in the Divine dealings with Mankind in successive ages, and to rejoice in transferring the history or song of temporal Israel to a spiritual society, may be justified as innocent, even recommended as edifying. We need not exclude from the region of devout metaphysics a speculation, how far the dread Being, to whom our thoughts are known long before, may have calculated the impulses of his ancient worshippers and their expression, so that things spoken of old might become applicable again; the songs of Zion became hymns of the Church, the praise of king David he transferred to a mental king, the prayer for Solomon, the sorrow of Jeremiah, possibly

the birth of Hezekiah, repeated in the greatest (we must not say "the only") Christ. The mischief begins, when the natural and historical sense is denied, even its assertion made criminal, because a theory has been introduced, that the direct and primary (sometimes it is said the exclusive) application of all these passages to Jesus, and their prediction of Him as the Messiah, supply the grand argument, at least one of the two cardinal arguments, on which the claim of Christianity to be considered a supernatural Revelation rests. Evidence that no less than this has been the claim preferred, (though when its withdrawal is found necessary, the description of it will be treated as calumnious), may be found in four writers of repute on different grounds, Pearson on the Creed, Keith on Prophecy, Joseph Wolff's Autobiography, Joseph McCaul's Essays.

At what stage the postponement of unfulfilled hopes, destined to be often renewed, first appeared necessary; how far a colloquial exposition in the Synagogues, a verbal mysticism in the Targums, and that confusion of Rabbinical and Hellenizing thought at Alexandria, of which Philo is the most familiar type, and Origen the most famous offspring, prepared the way for our popular interpretations, are inquiries which I gladly resign to profounder archæologists of literature. Jerome, the father of our Hermeneutics, built his work upon Origen, who drew from Philo, or shared the influences which moulded Philo. On the mysterious incubation of Alexandrian thought, I could but offer conjecture. Possibly it may have contained a germ derived from India. That the Jewish mind, in that phase of it which was disposed to erudite trifling, furnished an element in the process, is sufficiently proved by the mystical word-play, to which the race was prone, and which, aggravated by the influences

of a translated literature, swells from the Septuagint downwards. Originally there seems sufficient proof that the primary historical meaning was not supposed to be destroyed by the mystical adaptation. Philo, Origen, and Jerome, often preserve both, though perhaps none of them consistently; certainly not Jerome. Gradually the fatal custom invaded the schools, of regarding the natural sense as Jewish, and the mystical as Christian, until we came to our present confusion, when allegory is no longer adapted to history, but substituted for it. When Jerome dares, he greatly prefers denying the natural sense, and calling it a Jewish calumny (Joel iii.; Comm. xvii. on Isaiah lxiv. A. V.; Micah i. 10, 11.) Oftener he grants it, and proceeds to graft mysticism upon it. When in the Introduction to his second Part upon Micah, he says, "I warn the bulls of Basan who have surrounded me "to be quiet, and cease their ill sayings, lest they be told "of their ill deeds," we see incongruous allusion to the 22nd Psalm mixed with the Prologues of Terence. When at the outset of the first chapter, as elsewhere, he says, "As far as concerns the history, it follows the order of "captivity; because Samaria was first captured, afterwards Jerusalem, the Title of the Prophecy is of "Samaria and Jerusalem; as far, however, as concerns the mystical meanings, because Samaria is always "taken of heresies, and Jerusalem of the Church, "we affirm that the Word of the Lord comes to the "humble," [*i.e.* Micaiah, afflicted of Jehovah] "and coheir "of Christ, concerning perverse doctrines, and the Church "if perchance she has committed any sin,"—this language is but a specimen of the extent to which meanings alien to the Prophet's mind, probably to the Divine mind, may be grafted upon the simple text. Thus "impietas Jacobi conciliabula hæreticorum;" Jacob's impiety may mean

heretical conventicles. Judah means Christ, because Christ is praised, and it was written of Judah, "Thou art he "whom thy brethren shall praise." "The mountains are "shaken" means, that the doctrines of philosophers are shattered. The "seven anointed chiefs" raised against the Assyrian may be taken as the Patriarchs, Prophets and Saints, raised by the three persons of the Trinity to confront the Devil, who as a hunter of souls is meant by Nimrod, but notwithstanding his fiery darts must fall like lightning from heaven. Also the eight steps of Ezekiel's temple and the eighth day after birth, being that of circumcision, may be intended. The reconciliation of the Ten tribes means the conversion of the Jews. Ephratha, though its root means fruitfulness, and is elsewhere so explained by Jerome, is here made to mean fury, and compelled to signify the rage of Herod. Migdal-eder is interpreted as the Church. The first dominion is similarly mysticised into something divine. I have extracted these specimens of Jerome, the father of so many divines, not wishing to excite ridicule, nor denying ingenuity and a confused learning (of the kind which makes mad) in the agglomeration of texts, which, led by verbal punning more than by coincidence of meaning, he crowds together from all parts; but my desire is to shew serious readers, how ill a service we do to God and his truth, when we lay such foundations of men's faith. Whatever such things may be, they are not interpretation of the Prophet. It is needless to accumulate later instances of a system long dominant, which though disowned where no longer tolerated, is still enforced as a yoke grievous to the few, where the ignorance of the many renders its enforcement safe.[1]

[1] It deserves not to be forgotten, that a clergyman in our day, who acknowledged every doctrinal obligation of his office, was not only proscribed—but prosecuted, though illegally, for endeavouring to remove errors of the

With the revival of literature the long change began. In a few important passages Calvin is the firmest, throughout the tenor of Old Testament prophecy Grotius is the most comprehensive, among the earlier vindicators of the historical meaning. These two men, one greater in devotion, the other in scholarship, loosened by different methods the yoke of scholastic tradition. One did so, by placing the soul naked in the sight of the God of truth, and forbidding it to lie; the other, by shedding a flood of intellectual light, in which sophistries faded. Later scholars, not exclusively in Germany, claimed the inheritance of freedom. In England arose a collision which long smouldered, explicable by the coexistence of pretensions to liberty, and of an unsurpassed machinery for repressing in ecclesiastical circles inconvenient opinion. The legal mind of Pearson, though capable of majestic thought, yet seldom betraying the spark of diviner fire, but skilful in turning the spirit into flesh and the gospel into law, left as its monument a book, in which Patristic opinions are supported with all the faults of the Rabbinism to which he conceived himself opposed. Horsley, with coarser strength, and less learning, followed a similar track. Lowth, whose licentious alterations of the text lessen the authority of a tasteful mind, supported moderately the current traditions, but admitted into his notes with ingenuous inconsistency, suggestions of truer things. Bishop Kidder, in his Boyle Lectures, attempted a parallelism or duplication of sense, which, if not easy to prove dialectically, is less open to dis-

kind referred to, and at the same time charged by an Anglo-Indian Prelate, whose own views were comparatively liberal, with "misrepresentation," for supposing that any one could hold such errors. When the charge reached Europe, litigation on the subject had hardly ended, and was drawing after it an appendage of protestation. The moral effect on an intelligent native of India, whose attention might be drawn to the spectacle, must have been anything but edifying.

proof than interpretations which ignore the literal meaning. A greater name is the Dutch Vitringa, whose method of preserving the history but endeavouring to superadd mysticism, has been thought to approach perfection. My own impression of it is, that it has the defect of skilfully maintaining a foregone conclusion, instead of investigating what the conclusion ought to be. I shall have occasion to quote Oxlee hereafter. We need not here pass to modern and foreign critics, whose place in our circle of ecclesiastical authors is disputed, though our limits will have gradually to be enlarged so as to admit them. English readers will care more to be reminded of Archbishops Secker and Newcome, both pure characters, one of whom by numerous notes, and the other by a new translation, made an important advance in the right direction. The assumption, that the Prophecies must be arranged, even without evidence, so as to be predictive, still lay heavy on them. That the priority of a document, as well as the clearness of its allusion to an event, requires proof, was little considered. Yet even ordinary writers, Hurd, Middleton, (*Greek Article,* on Hebrews ii. a passage worthy of Bishop Cotton's perusal,) and specially Bishop Hare, a philologer far superior to Warburton, shewed (from one to two centuries ago) more reverence for the historical treatment of Prophecy than is now cordially approved. The ecclesiastical reaction, which has included England in its sweep, seems to familiarize men's minds with the idea of deciding by authority subjects proper for investigation. They give all to the ecclesiastical Cæsar, or Caiaphas, and reserve nothing for God's light. The endeavour to impose Revelation externally, as an oral communication from without, or as traditionally handed down in writing from God, instead of as a spiritual perception, or impulse, working by the force of truth and light from within, has powerfully

contributed to a traditional view of prophecy, as giving in appearance a logical fulcrum to move the intellect, instead of a direct voice to the conscience, or a key of sympathy to the heart.

If we imagine an intelligent and high-minded Hebrew, neither unskilled in his language, nor enslaved by the traditions of its Rabbins, first hearing that his race is discarded by Heaven for unbelief, then learning that all, or nearly all, the prophetical citations with which the Christians assail him are instances of superstition, ignorance, or ill faith, we may conjecture what influence the blandishments of our Societies for his conversion will have upon him. Whether what we call unbelief is what God calls so, I will not inquire. Whether veneration for the character of Christ would seem to a consistent inheritor of the Old Testament sufficient justification for embracing the range of Christian doctrine, with its Gentile affinities, and ideal accretions, is hardly a safe question. It may well be, that Christian ideas, fall and restoration, regeneration and sonship, subordination of precept and letter to principle and spirit, capacity of all progress for good in the boundlessness of spiritual freedom, and predestination to eternal life, are more elevating to man, as bringing him into nearer communion with the Infinite, than the Palæstinian range of the scriptural Jew. Still great difficulties, (among which I do not include lapse of time, or human opinions of impossibility, but moral difficulties,) would oppose the conversion of a sincere Hebrew to Christianity. The greatest of these is, that our representatives go to him, corrupting the oracles of his fathers, and requiring from him the like.

If we linger among our educated youths, or watch a studious clergyman when in growing maturity he reviews his convictions, or labours to convert others, we can hardly fail to become aware of the stupendous difficulty which

would be involved in requiring the common tradition of prophecy as an appendage to our faith in Christ; but infinitely more is involved in laying it down as the foundation, or as an indispensable premise. It may be true, that all difficulties on ulterior ground would not disappear, if this preliminary were handled with fairness by our advocates; but to lay down in the outset a gratuitous stumbling-block, must be unwise. If we could only conjecture, what loss the Christian faith has suffered, or how many souls have been temporarily wrecked (if even ultimately they reached a wider haven), through this fatal habit of making a complex error the pathway to a simpler truth, all the analogies of thought would be suggestive; but sad histories are written, and more hinted, of what happens from this cause to upright minds. Had ever Roman augur more reason for grim smile, or did Brahminical interpolator ever sin against literature more, than those who enforce (it can seldom be said defend) the traditional perversions? Minor discrepancies, or mistakes (even if these were truly imputed), would not destroy the force of the approximate agreement which prevails among the historical interpreters, or of the philological grounds (however varying in solidity,) on which that agreement rests.

Jerome says well, if ever he needed the Holy Spirit's aid, as always in interpreting the Scriptures we need it, he did so specially in Micah. Not that supernatural aid will dispense with the use of our faculties and instruments; nor probably, in its communication to the Prophets, did it dispense with their natural range of knowledge, or exceed it otherwise than in sentiment; but it will place us in communion with the Prophet's own mind, enabling us to feel his feeling, and think his thought; and, inspiring disdain of subterfuge, will teach us to

reapply the Prophet's language so far only as the older and newer circumstances correspond, or as kindred sentiments recur for expression. Suppose that in such a spirit our authorities, so long misled, were to unroll the truth of the sacred volume. Our right of calumniating the Jews would vanish : but in turn their objections would be diminished. We should not have petty predictions of such fleshly or earthly circumstances as, according to St. Paul, concern no man's salvation ; but a profound harmony would make itself more deeply felt as pervading the simple Patriarch's trust in God, the lawgiver's elaborate ceremonial, the righteous indignation of the Prophet, and that clear vision of the Father of our spirits in Christ, to which the others were but as helps to growth, lisping utterances to thought, means to ends. The polemical scholasticism of our faith might in some cases be innocently explained, and in others filtered away, until an unity of spirit and feeling, if not of formal definition, embraced all who would have had faith to prefer Abraham's guiltless sacrifice to one of blood; who would have shared with Moses the affliction of his countrymen (even with reproach from them) rather than be son of Pharaoh's daughter ; who would have taken part with the Priests against profaneness, yet with the Prophets against formalism ; who would have welcomed the long dormant spirit awakening in the Baptist, coming to perfection in the spiritual Christ; and who still think it natural (even if the testimony be remote and varying) for the Son of God, approved by the answer of the Spirit in men's consciences, to have entered into His Father's glory. To all such persons, though differing (as good men have differed, and may now more differ), in the degrees of certainty with which they know historical incidents, or are persuaded of external convincements, there would appear an

unity in Scripture, different from what is usually taught, but such as St. Paul suggests, an unity of the spirit of freedom; a testimony of belonging to Jesus would remain in the spirit of Prophecy which spake of old and speaks for ever.

Opportunities will offer elsewhere for touching other passages, which have been supposed to predict Jesus as the Messiah. Here let the reader notice, that as it did not enter into St. Paul's Gospel to know Jesus after the flesh, so Prophecies of fleshly circumstances, birth at Bethlehem, or genealogies supposed Davidical, are somewhat disparaged by him in comparison of the spiritual affinities, the principles once veiled in precepts, the predestination of mankind lurking under that of Israel, and the transfer of the law from tablets of stone to the conscience, which he traces veiled in the Old Testament, unveiled in the New.

Of course Micah the Morasthite, teaching in the reign of Hezekiah, is a different person from the son of Imlah who warned Hezekiah's remote ancestor Jehoshaphat; though the forms Micah and Micaiah are variations of one name, *Who is like Jah?* (Jerome's derivation from מכך 'to afflict,' being mere word-play.) Yet an editor, if not the writer, of the third book of Kings (1 Kings xxii. 28,) appears to have confused the earlier Prophet with his famous namesake, since he quotes as a speech of the former the first verse of the latter, *Hear, O Races, all of them.* A remark sometimes made, that the formula in either place is a simple and natural commencement, betrays a curious unconsciousness, that a poetical invocation of Israel's tribes, or of the world's nations, would hardly be addressed to a particular crowd; but our Authorized Version conceals the mistake. Beyond what Micah's own book discloses, there seems nothing trustworthy written of him, except the fresh

tradition in Jeremiah (xxvi. 18, 19), that his prophecy of destruction against Jerusalem was not fulfilled, because the king and people shewed repentance, "and Jehovah re-
" pented him of the evil which He had pronounced against
" them." This notice is extremely instructive, as shewing the conditional character of the warnings of the Prophets in general, and as authorising the view which I have ventured to take above, that this particular threat against Jerusalem, being contingent on the success of the contrary Prophets, is followed by brighter anticipations in the event of good counsels prevailing; so the unity of the book, or of the four chapters most confidently thought genuine, is preserved. The thoughtful reader, who might shrink from such a construction, however evidently suggested by the book itself, if it had no collateral justification, may feel re-assured by a comparison of the chapter in Jeremiah.

Critics in general magnify the style of Micah for its beauty and sublimity. Yet it may be observed that the two passages on which this estimate is chiefly founded, are not original; the grand vision of the Latter Days being a fragment which the Prophet has adopted, and the creed of natural piety ascribed to Balaam being quoted as a traditional song. There is no reason to doubt that Micah wrote the description of the Divine outcoming with which the Prophecy opens; but the conception embodied in it is common to the order of the Prophets, and must have been repeated in the schools as frequently as Homeric fragments among the Epic poets. On viewing more closely what is peculiar to Micah, we may find less to admire than in poets of less fame. He has neither the flowing sublimity of Joel, (except in the piece thought to have been borrowed from him,) nor the grand simplicity of Amos, nor the rude tenderness and yearning of Hosea. He has not so much the stamp of a free individuality, as a certain tone

of self-assertion. The word-play of the first chapter, though shared by Isaiah, as by other Prophets, is carried to an unusual excess. It may suggest, like the Psalms whose verses follow the order of the alphabet, doubt as to that theory which makes inspiration a direct infusion from Omniscience, though the lively naturalness of many Hebrew ideas gives it some countenance. If the Poem could be proved to have originally ended where the 4th chapter ends, it would be a striking instance of the limited range and baffled anticipations of Prophecy. Passing on, as it does, to a sublimer moral strain, and finding, as Christ teaches us to find, amidst baffled hopes consolation from trust in God, we willingly accept it as a true reflexion of life, the record of a patriot singer, in whom a higher spirit kept devotion alive, yet one of like passions and limits with ourselves. If a searching examination of the whole brings loss to veneration on the side of credulity, this may be compensated by gain in a more intelligent sympathy, and in the knowledge which in many a sore trial may comfort us, that the men of God of old sorrowed and prayed as we do, seeing, as we do, as through a glass darkly. We may even find a pleasure, which if not severely logical, is yet not altogether mystical, in turning memory into hope, and in saying to ourselves, though God did not see fit to build up the kingdom of Hezekiah, as Micah expected, He has given that hope a glorious transfiguration, by building up a spiritual dominion of One who was the Son of David in figure and poetry—whether in flesh, we hardly know. Though the twelve tribes have not found a reunion, which, as a thing local and national, would not affect any spiritual faith, the hearts of men in distant nations may be knit together by the free Spirit which once spoke narrower, and now speakes wider, hopes. The Holy Land is wherever God is. The Prophets are wherever free men worship in truth.

MICAH.

THE WORD *of the* ETERNAL *which was to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw upon Samaria and Jerusalem.*

1. Hear, Races, all of you;[1] hearken, earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord, the ETERNAL, be witness against you, the Lord from the temple of his holiness.

2. For behold the ETERNAL coming forth out of his place, that he cometh down[2] and trampleth on the high places of the earth;

3. So that the mountains[3] are molten under him, and

[1] *All of you.* Heb. all of them. *Races.* Or, tribes.
[2] *That he cometh down.* Or, And cometh down.
[3] *So that the mountains.* Or, And the mountains.

An inscription by some ancient Rabbi, mentions the guess which the book suggested to him about its author's life and times. See a truer account in Jeremiah xxvi. 18, 19.

1. The Prophet Micah being about to describe the sorrows which he had seen brought upon Samaria, and parts of Judæa by Assyrian invaders, begins by invoking attention to such events as judgments from God. Hear, he says, All races, that is, all tribes of Israel, or less probably, remoter nations also. Take these troubles as pleadings with you by the Invisible Wielder of the World. Place

the valleys cloven, as wax before the fire, as waters poured down the precipice.

4. For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what are the high places of Judah? Are they not Jerusalem?

5. So make I Samaria into a heap of the field, and into plantings of a vineyard; and I pour down her stones into the valley,[4] and lay her foundations bare.

6. And all her graven images are dashed[5] in pieces, and all her love-gifts are burned with fire, and all her idols do I make a desolation, for of a harlot's gift she gathered, and to a harlot's gift they shall return.

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[4] *Into the valley.* LXX. εἰς χάος.

[5] *Are dashed.* Or shall be dashed. The Hebrew present and future are not distinguished by form, but by context and conception of sentence.

Him before your mind's eye, as issuing not from Sion's Temple, but from Sanctuary of Eternity; so that where His Majesty shines, Earth and her mountains tremble. For thus a devout imagination pictures things spiritual under fleshly forms; especially the Prophets made Earth tremble, as they conceived of the Almighty lighting upon it. The Poets of other nations have like images.

4. These calamities came of sinfulness, grievous enough for each city to be counted an idol altar.

5, 6. So the destruction takes the form of a Divine sentence. For all things in Heaven and Earth are ordered by the counsel of God; so that when we see the stones of a hill city swept into a valley, we may say, God lays her foundations bare. If wealth was won by idolatrous commerce, and tempted foreign invasion, it would go as evil a way as it came. Israel would not be wedded to Jehovah, so her lovers stripped her.

7. For this let me wail and howl; let me go stript and barefoot; I will make a wailing like the jackals, and a mourning like the owlet's daughters.

8. For grievous are her wounds;[6] for it has come to Judah; it reaches to the gate of my people, to Jerusalem.

9. In Gath tell it not *gaily;* in Acre be not aching;[7] in Dust-town, (Beth-ophrah,) roll thyself in the dust.[8]

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[6] *Grievous are her wounds.* The Heb. has a singular participle, followed by a plural noun.

[7] LXX. οἱ ἐν Ἀκείμ. So nearly Theodoret and Cyril. A vast consent of ancients and moderns believes some city's name to have been once part of our text, and some one resembling in sound בכה to weep. Since Acre, with prep. ב, answers the conditions, being, like Gath, a hostile city, in which the Jews were not to shew their sorrow to strangers, I have, with Reland and many critics guiding me, taken the rare liberty of altering the text. The version of the text would have been, *Weeping, weep not;* or Weep not at all.

[8] *Roll thyself.* So the Heb. margin; but the text, *I roll myself*, or by a possible idiom, thou hast rolled thyself. Ophrah, or Beth-ophrah, belonged to Benjamin, but was not far from Bethlehem, to which there may be a lurking allusion. (Joshua xviii. 23.)

7, 8. So the Prophet's feelings are roused into the passion of deep woe. He sees the stroke approaching his own city.

Jerome complains, that the Marcionites, in magnifying the imperfection of the Old Testament, argued from this passage that it represents God as the author of evil. It is true that our distinctions of physical calamity from moral evil, or of permission from command, or of temporal result from eternal design, are hardly taken into account by the vivid speech of Hebrew or Arab Seer, but that justification of God, which they aim at, was implied when not expressed. Compare Isaiah xlv. 7; Job xxxiv. 10, xlii. 5; Eccles. viii. 13, 14.

9, 10, 11. Joy for the Philistines to see the Jewish patriots weeping. Beauty turns to shame. No more going forth to conquer. No neighbour to stand by one.

10. Pass your way, inhabitress of Shaphir (Fair-town), having thy shame naked; the inhabitress of Tzaanan (Forth-town) has not gone forth; the mourning of Beth-ezel (Neighbour-town) shall take from each of you his standing.[9]

11. Surely the inhabitress of Maroth (Bitter-town) sickened for good: surely evil came down from Jehovah to the gate of Jerusalem.

12. Bind the chariot to the swift horse, thou inhabitress of Lachish (Horse-town?); she was the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion; for in thee were found the transgressions of Israel:

13. Therefore shalt thou give presents[1] to Moresheth-Gath; the houses of Achzib (Lie-town) shall be a lie to kings of Israel.

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[9] Though neither Tzaanan nor Beth-ezel seems known, and the Versions differ hopelessly, the meaning of the Hebrew is plain; the town wont to send forth hundreds no longer sent forth tens; the affliction of her neighbour town took away her support. The Chaldee has for "standing-place," *houses of desire*, implying a mistake of חמד for עמד. The Greek and Latin are in different ways wrong.

[1] *Give presents;* or give divorce. Either become tributary to a town once subject to Judah, or at least renounce the possession of it for ever. Probably this latter sense is truest. Of the towns mentioned in this chapter, the descriptions run chiefly, *Oppidulum, Viculus, Ruinæ*, Townlet, Hamlet, Ruins. Some are but guessed. The chief thing to notice is, that they lay near the Prophet's home circle, suffered from Assyrian invasions, and endured to have their names twisted into terms of mourning.

Bitterness is not in name, or in adjoining stream, but in heart.

12, 13, 14. Sennacherib's troops besieged Lachish first of the cities of Judah. Possibly some sin had begun there. In vain Gath will be claimed as belonging to Judah. Divorced from Israel, she will rather receive presents in turn. Strongholds are deceptive. Possessions

14. Yet will I bring the inheritor to thee, inhabitress of Mareshah, (town of heritage); to Adullam shall come the glory of Israel.

15. Make thee bald, and shear thee for thy darling children: enlarge thy baldness as the eagle; for they are gone utterly into exile from thee.

II.

1. Woe to the devisers of iniquity, and workers of evil upon their beds; at the lightening of the morn, then they work it, for it is in the power of their hand.[2]

2. And they have coveted fields and seized them; and houses, and have taken them away; and they have oppressed man and household, and owner and his inheritance.

3. Therefore thus spake the ETERNAL, Behold me devising over this family evil, from which you shall not re-

[2] Ἐγένοντο λογίζομενοι κόπους . . . οὐκ ᾖραν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν χεῖρας αὐτῶν. Καὶ ἐπεθύμουν ἀγροὺς, καὶ διήρπαζον ὀρφανοὺς, καὶ οἴκους κατεδυνάστευον, καὶ διήρπαζον, κ. τ. λ. So the LXX. in which the tenses deserve notice, giving, as I think, the spirit of the original. The πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν is a mistake, like the Vulgate, "Contra Deum est manus eorum." But in the tenses the Vulgate coincides: "Et concupierunt agros, "et violenter tulerunt, et rapuerunt domos, et calumniabantur virum, &c."

are dispossessed. Instead of David's kingly city, his cave will be the refuge of a humbled and fugitive people.

15. The hair shorn in mourning, will leave the bereaved heads like the bald eagle.

1, 2. After describing the calamity, the Prophet's mind turns to reflect upon its causes, and finds them in the grinding of the poor by the greedy chieftains of Samaria. The best commentary here is to read the 2nd and 3rd chapters of the Prophet Amos.

3. So the evil day came, not without God's forecasting it in His Eternal mind.

move your necks; neither shall you walk loftily, for this is an evil time.

4. In that day one taketh up against you a parable, and lamenteth with dirge of lamentation, and saith, We are despoiled in spoiling; he changeth the portion of my people; how he removeth it for me; he divideth our fields to the breaker in bits.[3]

5. Therefore shall not be to thee a caster of line by lot in the congregation of Jehovah.

6. Distil[4] not teaching, *ye say to them that* teach: they shall not distil teaching to these; reproaches shall not take hold of that which is named the house of Jacob.

7. Is the spirit of the ETERNAL straitened? Or are

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[3] *To the breaker in bits.* So לְשׁוֹבֵב (or לַ) seems best taken, as by Kimchi. Or, as most take it, to the refractory, *i.e.* the enemy. Some, with less probability, as an infinitive, *to restore*—as if Jehovah were restoring the plundered fields.

[4] *Distil*, or drop teaching. Not prophesying, in the English sense; but dropping speech like rain. The Greek strangely introduces the sense of weeping. The last clause, *That which is named the house of Jacob*, is usually disjoined from the 6th verse, and prefixed to the 7th; whereby a noun becomes deficient in the first, and redundant in the second. *Vulg.* Dicit domus Jacob. LXX. *οἶκος Ἰακὼβ παρώργισε πνεῦμα Κυρίου*, neither of which renderings the words bear.

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4. As the Divine counsel passes into act, mourners on earth take up their parable. Those who had grasped other men's lands, see their own parcelled out in allotments to strangers.

5. No inheritance remains for the greedy tyrant, but his seed are rooted out. (Psalm cix. 13.)

6. Warnings had been rejected, because the nation's name had been valued more than right, and made a formal protection.

7. The Prophet asks, if God has ceased to teach?

these his doings? do not my words do good with him that walketh uprightly?

8. But in presence of my people there riseth up one for an enemy; from in front of peace ye strip off the garment; from the passers by in confidence, as if they were returning from war.[5]

9. The women of my people ye drive out from their dainty houses; from off her infants ye take away for ever my ornament.

10. Arise and depart: for this *is* not *your* rest; even because it is polluted, it shall bring forth,[6] and with a sore birthpang.

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[5] Καὶ ἔμπροσθεν ὁ λαός μου εἰς ἔχθραν ἀντέστη. Κατέναντι τῆς εἰρήνης αὐτοῦ τὴν δόραν αὐτοῦ ἐξέδειραν. By combining the LXX. thus far, with the latter half of the verse in the Vulgate, "eos qui transibant simpliciter convertistis in bellum," and by reading שָׁלֵם or שָׁלוֹם הָאֵדֶר I extract my version, which follows, I confess, the ideas of the sentence rather than its words as the text stands. Jerome had preceded me in taking אֶתְמוֹל in a sense analogous to the מִמּוֹל which immediately follows. If any one thinks there is too much conjecture in this, he has only to take the common version: "Even of late my people is risen up as an enemy, ye pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely as men averse from war," but the closing words "averse from war," can hardly be right, for "returning from war."

[6] *It shall bring forth.* Or, shall destroy. The radical idea seems to be of a twist or pang; but see, below, Isaiah xxii. 31—3.

Does He not deal with men? To the upright His words are pleasant.

8, 9. Alas! The few honest and good, who are truly God's people, are treated hostilely by the great many of the house of Jacob. Conquest is exercised without the right of war. Homes are violated, possibly with legal pretext, as for debt.

10. Since the house of Jacob thus pollutes the holy land, it will vex them, or bring forth sorrow to them.

11. If a man walking in wind and falsehood[7] lie, "I will distill thee *speech* of wine and strong drink," then he becomes distiller *of doctrine* to this people.

12. [8] In gathering will I gather, Jacob, all of thee; in assembling I will assemble the remnant of Israel; I will set him together as a flock in Bozrah, as a herd in the midst of its driftway shall they cry aloud for crowding.

13. The breaker is gone up before them; they have made a breach, and have crossed the gate, and they go

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[7] *In wind and falsehood;* or, In the spirit of God, yet using it falsely, as Balaam, or Simon Magus. But compare Hosea viii. 7.

[8] Authorities of about equal weight, ancient and modern, consider these two verses (1.) as a promise from God of gathering his people for salvation; (2.) or again, as a threat of gathering them for destruction. (3.) Some of the

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11. Men are ready enough to hear smooth sayings from easy livers, who encourage wine and luxury, forgetting that the full pulse of revellers is opposed to the calm spirit of prayer and meditation. See Isaiah xxiv. (A. V. xxviii.)

12, 13. So Jehovah, having long spared, and given foretastes of judgment in the earlier Assyrian inroads, at length gathered all whom Tiglath-pileser had spared into towns which Shalmaneser beleaguered. As a Prophet who passes as Isaiah (A. V. xxxiv. 6.) describes Jehovah having a sacrifice in Bozrah and a slaughter in Idumæa, filling his sword with the blood of flocks, so Micah sees the Ephraimites crowded helplessly in narrow streets, like sheep bleating in a driftway, (comp. Psalm xliv. 11, 22,) and hears the crash of wall and gate, as the besieger traverses the city. Then the multitude are driven forth, and Jehovah, once their protector, sanctions the ruin, addressing them as it were with eloquent disaster, or suffering his prophets to say, Have not now the warnings of Amos, the sighs of Hosea, been fulfilled?

forth thereby; and their king passes before them, and Jehovah at their head, and saith,[9]

14. Hear now, oh heads of Jacob, and rulers of the house of Israel, *was it* not for you to know the judgment?

15. Haters of good, and lovers of evil; plunderers of men's skin from off them, and of their flesh from off their bones;

16. And who ate the flesh of my people, and stripped their skin from off them; and their bones they brake, and chopped them in pieces, as it were in the pot, and as flesh in the midst of the cauldron.[1]

17. Then they cry unto the ETERNAL, and he answers them not; but he hides his face from them in that (*evil*) time, inasmuch as they have made their doings evil.

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best modern scholars (whose view is well worthy of the fullest consideration,) take them in the sense of promise, but as a false one, coming from the flatterers, who walked in the spirit of falsehood, and introduced by Micah in scornful contrast to the actual event. (4.) I agree with those who understand the gathering to be a gathering for destruction, but conceive it to narrate the sack of Samaria, tidings of which had now reached Jerusalem.

[9] The words *And saith*, are in the LXX. *καὶ ἐρεῖ.*

[1] *Ὃν τρόπον κατέφαγον τὰς σάρκας τοῦ λαοῦ μου, καὶ τὰ δέρματα αὐτῶν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἐξέδειραν, καὶ τὰ ὀστέα αὐτῶν συνέθλασαν καὶ ἐμέλισαν, κ. τ. λ.* LXX. And so the Vulgate. Qui comederunt carnem populi mei, et pellem eorum desuper excoriaverunt, et ossa eorum confregerunt et conciderunt, &c. The Hebrew tenses, duly preserved in both these Versions (notwithstanding the tendency which both of them betray elsewhere to throw everything forward, rather than backward,) afford a powerful justification of the construction which refers these verses to the past sin and ruin of Samaria.

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16. So the evil which the unseen Judge had purposed upon the whole family comes to pass: and in the day of evil they cry in vain, for their doings had been evil.

III.

1. Thus saith the ETERNAL concerning the Prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry Peace, and whoso putteth not into their mouths, they proclaim against him a holy war :[2]

[2] *Proclaim a holy war.* Or, consecrate a war: *i.e.* commence, or inaugurate one.

1. Having seen the result of godless counsels in Samaria, the Prophet turns with animation to blame such counsellors, whether in Ephraim or Judah. The pleasing fancy, that the Hebrew Prophets altogether escaped the sins of correspondent teachers, demagogues, bards, scalds, preachers, priests, poets, orators and eloquent journalists, elsewhere, is rudely dissipated by Micah's plain-spoken description of the greediness which stained some of the Prophets, and the crusades which they stirred against their enemies. It would be unutterably shocking to think sacred things must be necessarily thus prostituted ; too much religious history shews the danger of such prostitution. The Priesthoods of the ancient world had seldom such extent of power as that of mediæval Rome, or of our modern Prelacy, which with wider range can weave from the Severn to the Ganges, and from the Orkneys to South Africa, a web of misrepresentation around man or book which would open a way of simpler truth for the devout heart yearning after its Maker ; yet in Egypt, Persia, Palestine, India, such power has often crushed freedom, and buried truth under sacerdotalism. That the genius of the Hebrew Prophets had, like that of our Puritans and Quakers, a more personal independence, or a sense of God's breath stirring each man's own mind from its depth, did not altogether free them from the danger of self-assertion, greediness, outcry.

2. Therefore be night upon you from vision, and let it darken upon you from divining; and go down the sun over the prophets, and blacken over them the day;

3. So let the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded; and let them cover over their lip all of them, because they have no answer from God.

4. But verily I am full of power, the breathing of the ETERNAL, and judgment, and might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

5. Hear this now, heads of the house of Jacob, and rulers of the house of Israel, that thrust away[2] judgment, and who distort all equity,

[2] *Thrust away.* Or pervert.

2, 3. Micah prays that all such abuses of a sacred gift may come to an end. He teaches us, incidentally, (as St. Paul shews, by rebuking the abuse of *gifts* in the Corinthian Church,) that the supernatural source of insight and sacred expression, still provides no safeguard against the abuse of such gifts by human freedom. He prays that such diviners may come to naught; their wisdom be turned into foolishness. Since with God is the well of truth, and in His light alone we see light, there is something grandly terrible in this prayer, that the darkness of intellectual night, a darkness which may be felt, may fall upon deceivers of the people.

4—8. The simplicity of ancient times permits Micah, without the skilful refinements of modern vanity, to assert his own integrity, which answers in action to the sight of God in speculation. He continues thundering, with an echo of the tones of Amos, against Priest and Prophet no less than secular great men; not distinguishing Church from State, but denouncing ruin upon both.

We know from Jeremiah xxvi. 19, that these threats

6. Thou that buildest[3] Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity,

7. Her heads judge for reward, and her priests teach for hire, and her prophets divine for silver: yet they lean themselves upon the ETERNAL, saying, Is not the ETERNAL in our midst? there shall not come upon us evil?

8. Therefore for your sakes shall Zion be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem become heaps,[4] and the Mountain of the House *become* high places of the forest.

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[3] *Thou that buildest.* Or, In building,

[4] *Heaps.* Hebr. עִיִּים, but Chaldaising עִיִּין. The latter is the form here used, though not finding critics before me to have made the remark, I suspect myself for making it. Considering that the allusion in Jeremiah proves the passage genuine, I suppose this form must be due to transcription. Otherwise, I should suspect the passage.

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were not fulfilled, as the form of prediction in which they are uttered, would lead us to expect they must have been. For God, who commits to his true servants a ministry of warning and of reconciliation, retains in his own knowledge the times and seasons, which are fixed by conditions half known to us. We can always say that irreclaimable men and states must perish, but rarely that this man is irreclaimable, or this state's doom fixed, until God so writes it in events which are the words of the Creator Spirit. Thus the limits of human prediction are the same as those of human absolution. Both are conditional.

9. Micah seems half to recall his threat, or to be unable to support the idea of it as permanent; for he looks forward to a recovery, or perhaps after an interval returning to his work, judging it by the religious zeal of Hezekiah, and the prosperity of his reign, (possibly at the time when Sennacherib had been overthrown in the desert, or the Babylonian province given signs of revolt from Nineveh, and offered by Merodach Baladan alliance to Hezekiah),

9. [5] Yet shall it be in the aftertime of days, the Mountain of the House of the ETERNAL shall be established at the head of the mountains, and it shall exalt itself above the hills, and unto it shall flow populations,

10. [5] And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the ETERNAL's mount, and to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us of his ways, and that we may walk in his paths; for out of Zion goeth forth law, and the word of the ETERNAL from Jerusalem;

11. And He judges between great races, and rebukes mighty nations even to afar; so that they beat their swords

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[5] In Schoettgen's amplification of Lightfoot, 2nd Mess. cvii. and in the Section on Micah, the adaptations of this and other passages to later Messianic ideas may be found by those who value them. My reason for not citing them at length, is that they furnish no clue to Micah's meaning, or to the sense in which his contemporaries understood him; but only to the ever-changing hopes of fresh generations, for which expounders time after time devised pretexts. Nor yet is the Messiah of the Rabbins the Christian Messiah, but something nearer Micah's idea of a Davidical King, arising from the family of Bethlehem, but still an idea fluctuating.

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he then adopts an older fragment of prophetic song, breathing brighter aspirations for the latter days, the after-growth of time.

9—13. A time must come, such as patriot and bard have dreamt, when the hills of Moab or Samaria, (compare Psalm lxviii. 16, 17; St. John iv. 21,) will no longer enviously contest the supremacy of King David's Mount, where Solomon built a temple to the King of Kings, and where Prophets taught words befitting the city whose ancient name was Peace. As the happier ideas of Mankind's destiny are fulfilled, the true God, whose name and title are alone Eternal, will mould nations into unity. The old promise of a land for Israel to possess will be fulfilled, amid higher aspirations for the peace of the world. If

into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more;

12. But they abide each man under his vine, and under his own fig-tree; and there is none to make them afraid, for the mouth of the ETERNAL one of hosts hath spoken.

13. For all races walk each one in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the ETERNAL our God for ever and ever.

14. In that day, is the saying of the ETERNAL, will I bring together her that halteth, and will gather her that was driven forth, and her on whom I wrought evil,

15. And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far away a strong nation, and the ETERNAL shall be King over them in Mount Zion henceforth and for ever.

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nations cling each to its national Deity, at least let Judah walk in the light of truth, and the God of truth. This passage does not hold forth a personal Messiah, but paints the hope of the latter days, the good time ever coming. It can only by some inversion of the Prophet's own meaning be applied to Christianity, which yet may be said to fulfil it, if we take into account the security enjoyed by Jews as residents in other lands. As God's thought transcends our thought, so by events outrunning our hopes He alone is the Eternal Prophet.

14, 15. Micah trusts that the exiles from Samaria may yet be restored into a kingdom, of which David's descendants, such as Hezekiah, may be pious vicegerents, but of which the true King, as under the old theocracy, will be Jehovah worshipped on Mount Zion, teaching concord by men of peace. (Comp. 1 Kings xi. 31—39.) We must suffer the local association to fall from this hope,

16.[6] And thou, Migdal-eder (*sheep-tower*), stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall come kingdom, and her former dominion come to the daughter of Jerusalem.

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[6] The Hebrew of this verse is more literally rendered: "*Unto thee* "*arriveth—and cometh the former dominion—kingdom to the daughter of* "*Jerusalem.*" By treating the words "to the daughter" as *possessive*, we might interpret this, that Jerusalem's kingdom should come to Migdal-eder, and that in the plenitude of its former dominion. But both the repetition of the verb, and considerations of the rhythm persuade me, that the word *kingdom* מַמְלָכָה has got accidentally misplaced. Whether the transposition on which I have ventured, be accepted or rejected, it affects the rhythm, but not the sense. *Stronghold.* Hebr. Ophel, probably a local name, for the Nethinim, or Temple servants, dwelt in Ophel. See Nehemiah iii. 26—27. Very remarkable in this verse is the insertion in the Septuagint: ἐπὶ σὲ ἥξει καὶ εἰσελεύσεται ἡ ἀρχὴ, ἡ πρώτη βασιλεία ΕΚ ΒΑΒΥΛΩΝΟΣ τῇ θυγατρὶ Ἰερουσαλήμ. When was Babylon thus interpolated into the Greek? and why not into the Hebrew? May it, with the unusual confusion of rhythm, throw light on the mention of Babel two verses lower? If the name here, and the whole verse below, were interpolated on the return from the exile, a later editor might in learned discretion strike out the more manifest error, but retain the less manifest; yet both of them might already have been translated into Greek copies. After all, it may be only a Greek gloss. A sort of analogy to the supposition above made is supplied by the insertion in the Greek, and in our Anglican Prayer-book of the 14th Psalm of three verses which are not in the Hebrew, nor in our Bibles, but which were supposed to have been quoted by St. Paul, Rom. iii. 13, from the Psalm, and which therefore on a strict theory of inspiration must belong to it.

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before we can reconcile it with Christ's teaching of the woman of Samaria.

16. It might seem unlikely that a family sprung from shepherds should wield again the sceptre of the Twelve Tribes, but yet to Jesse of Bethlehem and his seed (therefore might be said to *Migdal-eder*, a sheep-tower within a mile of Bethlehem, and possibly connected with Jesse's family,) the kingdom belonged, and to Jerusalem it should return. We lose the force of this verse, unless we observe that

IV.

1. Now wherefore criest thou with a cry ?[1] is there no king in thee ? is thy counseller perished ? for the pang layeth hold of thee, as a woman in travil.

2.[2] Be in pangs and break forth, daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail; for now thou goest forth from the city, and dwellest in the field, and comest to Babylon ; there shalt thou be delivered ; there the ETERNAL shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies.

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[1] The Greek ἱνατί ἔγνως κακά ; " wherefore knowest thou evil," instead of " criest thou," is a pardonable instance of the mistakes of the LXX. Jerome more correctly " Quare mærore contraheris ?"

[2] On the reasons for printing this verse in type suggestive of doubt, see the Introduction to Micah. The reader should carefully notice that this birth-pang of the Daughter of Jerusalem is the agony and throe of the Commonwealth : therefore has nothing to do with literal childbirth; as of Isaiah's prophetess.

Migdal-eder is a local name. It denotes the spot where Jacob spread his tent after Rachel's death, Genesis xxxv. 21. It is called Zion's stronghold, probably in connexion with David, unless it could be shewn that the name was transferred to a spot in Jerusalem. Jerome fixes its original locality. (Compare 1 Kings xii. 27—31.)

1. Micah, in hopes that, notwithstanding the threat above pronounced by him, the good time desired in the song of former poets may yet come, and that the commonwealth may bring forth in deliverance the aspiration with which she is pregnant, addresses the daughter of Zion, and bids her rally. Why should she cry ? If we omit a verse, which interrupts the talk of the Assyrian crisis by strangely introducing the future bondage at Babylon,

3. And now are gathered against thee mighty nations, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye gaze *its fill* upon Zion.

4. But they know not the devising of the ETERNAL, and understand not his counsel; for themselves hath he gathered as a sheaf into the threshing-floor.

5. Rise thou and thresh, daughter of Zion, for thy horn I make iron, and thy hoofs I make brass; so that thou crushest in pieces mighty races, and thou vowest their spoil to the ETERNAL, and their substance to the Lord of the whole earth.

6. Now range thyself in troops, daughter of troops; siege is laid against us; with a rod they smite upon the cheekbone the judge of Israel.

7. But thou, Bethlehem-Ephratah, little[3] to be

[3] *Little.* So the Hebrew. Since in the first Gospel it is rendered "Thou art not the least," some insert a negative here, or read interrogatively, so as to imply greatness: *e.g.* Art thou little? Nay, great. But an adaptation by a Galilean peasant, whether intended to be cited as predictive, or only as allusive to familiar phrase, must not bias our rendering of the Prophet, whose meaning is clear enough.

(which was no deliverance,) the Prophet proceeds, 3—6, to say that the attempts of besiegers, such as Rabshakeh or Sennacherib, will be foiled. Though Ephraim's king Hoshea in chains may be insulted, Sion has only to put forth her strength, and scatter the Assyrians and their allies, whether Persian subjects, Edomite tributaries, or Syrian mercenaries.

7. The religious zeal and courage of Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 4—7) mark him out as a prince likely to encourage the Prophet's hope, that out of David's house was already rising a shepherd, unlike the short-lived dynasties which had usurped Samaria. Even if he does not mean, without naming, Hezekiah, he is confident that the Divine right

(*counted*) among the families of Judah, out of thee cometh forth unto me to be ruler in Israel, whose descent is from antiquity, from the days of old.[4]

8. Therefore he giveth them up, until the time that one is in travail bringeth forth, and *until* the rest of his brethren return to the sons of Israel;

9. Then he stands and is a shepherd in the might of

[4] *Days of old.* Heb. יְמֵי עוֹלָם Gr. *ἡμερῶν αἰῶνος.* The word עוֹלָם (Latin *Olim*) is used of the ancient landmark, Prov. xxii. 28, of dim antiquity, Genesis vi. 4; and especially of ancestral times or glories, as in Amos, vii. 9, (A. V. ix. 11.) which Micah probably had before him. Jerome introduced the phrase, Diebus æternitatis. The Chaldee Targum, though it has the later notion of a Messiah, paraphrases here simply 'the days of yore.'

of the ancient line of Bethlehem (little as the town may be reckoned) will prevail. Naturally and innocently, later Jews, suffering from Babylonian, Syrian, Roman, applied the old words to their ever fresh hopes of David's realm reviving: later Christians, learning that God's kingdom is of the mind, saw in Jesus their Lord a better King, by the same right as in the Church a better Jerusalem. Both interpretations, though mutually antagonistic, proceed fundamentally on a like system of re-adapting the ancient letter. I do not dispute, how far God designed what He has actually permitted; but my business as interpreter is with the meaning of Micah, who has in his eye deliverance from the contemporary Assyrian.

8. There can be no prosperity without concord, no triumph without union. So God seems to Micah to surrender ten tribes to exile, and two to weakness, until the pregnant Nation brings forth her hope, and *"the remnant"* (a phrase afterwards famous in other senses, but originating with the disruption under Rehoboam, see 1 Kings xii. 23.) of either realm is re-united to the other.

9—11. Then shall the invading Assyrian be thrown

the ETERNAL, in the majesty of the name of the ETERNAL his God; and they abide:[5] for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

10. And thus shall be peace, when the Assyrian[6] comes into our land; and when he tramples on our palaces, then will we raise against him seven shepherds and eight anointed chiefs;

11. So that they pasture the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod within her gates;[7] and there shall be a deliverer from the Assyrian when he enters our land, and when he tramples on our border;

12. So the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of mighty races, as *when* dew *falls* from the ETERNAL, as *when* small drops of rain *come* upon the grass, tarrying not for man, nor waiting for the sons of men.

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[5] *Abide.* Or return, as in ver. 8. So Vulg. *convertentur*, which may be preferable.

[6] *And thus shall be peace, when the Assyrian.* The Hebrew permits us to apply the pronoun to the manner of peace, or to the person just mentioned. The LXX. have ἔσται αὐτῇ εἰρήνη Ἀσσοὺρ ὅταν ἐπέλθῃ. The Vulgate is *erit iste pax.* The meaning is hardly in either way affected.

[7] *The land of Nimrod within her gates,* or *with her spears.* Vulg. *in lanceis ejus;* but Symmachus, a more faithful translator than the LXX. ἐντος πυλῶν αὐτῆς. Docet parallelismus a Prophetâ scriptum esse בִּפְתָחוֹתֶיהָם *scilicet lanceis, sive ensibus, eorum,* ut rectè Aben-Ezra, Kimchi, Aquila, Vet. Græc. Int. &c. Mutata vero lectio cogebat interpretes פְּתָחֶיהָ *portas,* sive *ostia,* intelligere, quod Symmachus, Theodotion, Jarchius, Maurerus, et alii, non malè fecerunt. Ipse, cum vererer Textum mutare, nec tamen de sensu vocis פְּתָחֶיהָ dubitarem, verbum verbo reddidi, nihilominus laudaturus, si quis ex nexu sententiæ mentem Prophetæ prætulerit.

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back, and the tide of conquest turn from Jerusalem to Nineveh.

12, 13. The exiles scattered from Samaria will then turn to account as auxiliaries, falling on the nations among

13. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of mighty races, as a lion among the cattle of the forest, as a young lion among flocks of sheep; who, when he goeth through, then he trampleth and rendeth, and deliverer there is none.

14. Thy hand shall be lifted [8] up upon thine oppressors, and all thy enemies shall be cut off.

15. And it shall be in that day, is the saying of the ETERNAL, that I will cut off thy horses out of thy midst, and cause thy chariots to perish,

16. And I will cut off the cities of thy land, and shatter all thy strongholds,

[8] *Thy hand shall be lifted.* Or, let thy hand be lifted up, &c.

whom they are driven, like the numerous drops of dew which cover a whole land, (comp. 2 Samuel xvii. 12,) or glistening in arms like the morning dew, (comp. Psalm cx. 3, so painfully mistranslated in our Liturgical Version,) and turning on their persecutors, like the grim lion rending a flock.

> "Demens, qui Rutulum in medio non agmine regem
> Viderit inrumpentem, ultroque incluserit urbi,
> Immanem veluti pecora inter inertia tigrim."

If any fulfilment can be assigned to these anticipations, it can only be by conjecturing that the revolt of provinces (as Media and Babylon) which dismembered the empire of Nineveh a century before its destruction, beginning therefore in the days of Micah, may possibly have been stimulated by transpopulation.

13, 14. Rise up, Judah, like crouching lion, and rend thy oppressors.

15, 16. Yet not Solomon's kingdom, with its chariots from Egypt, its pompous buildings, its oppressive taxes, and its forced labour, makes up the simple Prophet's ideal.

17. And I will cut off conjurings out of thine hand, and fortune-tellers thou shalt have no more,

18. And I will cut off thy graven images, and thy pillars [9] from the midst of thee, and thou shalt bow down no more to the work of thine hands.

19. And I will pluck forth thy statues[1] (*of the Queen of Heaven*) out of thy midst, and lay thy cities waste,

20. And I will work in wrath and fury revenge upon the nations which have not hearkened.

V.

1. Hearken ye now to what the ETERNAL saith: Arise thou and plead before the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice.

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[9] *Pillars.* Heb. מַצֵּבוֹת. Gr. στηλὰς. Doubtful, if erect statues, or stone pillars, such as Jacob set up at Bethel, which savouring of a ruder faith may have been ill looked on by the lettered Prophet. See note on Hosea iii.

[1] *Statues.* Heb. אֲשֵׁירִים. Gr. ἄλσῃ. (Comp. 2 Kings xxi. 7.) The word, whether akin to the name of Astarte, or meaning only an upright figure, (*e.g.* a full-length statue,) certainly is an image which might be erected in the Temple, and cast forth, and burnt, as by Josiah. The Septuagint having made it ἄλσος and the Vulgate *lucus*, our Authorized Version makes it "a grove;" and there is some danger in suggesting doubts of a rendering supported by its authority.

17—19. Rather a pure faith, and simple worship of reason, from which statues and symbols, signs and conjurings, shall have been cut off. Down with superstition and idolatry.

20. Only a people so simply worshipping can be God's people, and win from him triumph. Pity, that the Prophet's vision is stained by the too fervid patriot's cry for vengeance, and his ascription of man's passion to God. Here we see the Jewish shortcoming of Christ-like, or Gentile, forgivingness.

1. Either Micah, or some Prophet treading in his steps,

2. Hearken, mountains, to the ETERNAL's plea, and you strong foundations of the earth; for the ETERNAL has a plea with his people, and is reasoning with Israel:

3. My people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? answer against me.

4. For I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of slaves; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

5. My people, remember now, how Balak king of Moab consulted, and how Balaam son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal,[2] that you may know what is righteousness with the ETERNAL.

6. Wherewith shall I come before the ETERNAL, and bow myself to God on high? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with yearling calves?

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[2] *From Shittim unto Gilgal, i.e.* from Moab to Canaan: all the long journeyings of the Hebrews, or of Balaam himself. Some think these words a gloss, which may have crept from the margin into the text. It is equally possible that some clause which would have made them plain, may have dropt out.— *What is righteousness with the Eternal.* More literally, the righteousnesses of Jehovah. These are contrasted with the sentences of man, because the Divine approval and disapproval differ much from ours. Luke xvi. 15; Romans i. 17, 18.

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or whose later work is appended to the older, states here the moral conditions upon which the blessing of a righteous God, the eternal God of our consciences and of the spirits of all flesh, can alone be permanent.

1—8. God, who stamps on Nature something of his own majesty, and sets therein our souls, as in a temple, to worship not the fabric but the spiritual presence, pleads with us not by visible Schechinah, as Rabbins on this passage dream, (Schœttgen, 2. Mess. lxxix,) but spiritually by mountain, rock, and river, by down and fen, and by valleys that laugh with corn, for some remembrance of his bounty to our race, and his preservation of our fathers and

7. Will the ETERNAL be gracious for thousands of rams, for ten thousands of rivers of oil?[3] Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

8. He hath shewed thee, Man, what is good; and what doth the ETERNAL require of thee, but to do judgment, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?

[3] *Rivers of oil.* So the Heb.; but LXX. *χιμάρων πιόνων*, fat kids; and Vulg. hircorum pinguium; both implying a variation in the Heb. text, possibly רַחֲלֵי־שָׁמֶן.

ourselves. Our shortcoming or falling from our own better mind which witnesses to a Divine law, strikes us more awfully in such spots. The names of the mighty or holy dead, whether formally canonized as saints, or better consecrated in men's hearts by storied thought and deed, have a power to touch us more articulately eloquent than mere natural awe. If reverence blinded into dread suggests to us strange sacrifice or torture of our reason in obedience to form, or formula, or book, not so Abraham pleased God, nor Moses freed Israel, nor Aaron conceived sanctity, nor Miriam the patriot chant; but one in a reasoning faith, another in daring championship, another in teaching holiness because God is Holy, another in the fresh outburst of a kindling heart. As these and other such to Israel, so to England Cranmer's burnt hand and Naylor's branded brow, Bunyan and Baxter imprisoned and scorned, Cromwell working a deliverance worthy of Milton's singing, remain memories eloquent with warning. What could more gloriously teach how God should be approached, even if he dwell in light unapproachable, than the storied song of Balaam's endeavouring by many prayers and bloodshed of many oxen to win from Deity a curse against Israel? God was not so bribed to desert a simple and upright people; nor ever asks he from us aught save that which we find hardest to give, our life righteous, our affections loving, our worship humble? So the Gentiles saw and taught, as

9. The voice of the ETERNAL crieth to the city, and salvation is to him that feareth thy name.[4] Hear the rod,[5] and who hath appointed it.

[4] *Salvation is to him that feareth thy name.* So most of the Versions. But the Heb. text would give, "Salvation, or wisdom, is to him that beholdeth thy name;" or as the A. V. "*the man of* wisdom shall see thy name." A participle of יראא *to fear*, is suggested by the Versions as an older reading than the text from ראה *to see*, and is found in some MSS.; but a still older reading may be suspected, in which the participle of שמע *to hear* stood in the place of שְׁמֶךָ thy name. Then the sense would have been, 'and thy hearers shall behold salvation.'

[5] *Hear the rod,* &c. or Hear thou, tribe. Gr. φυλή. Lat. Tribus. The verb *appointed* would then refer to the tribe's governor. This may be the preferable sense.

their better moods shook off the yoke of older priestcraft, that a guiltless hand might touch the shrine acceptably, and costly victim not render it more pleasant to whatever powers shielded the household.

He hath shewed thee, Man, what is good. By these words the Prophet teaches, what Elijah learned in Horeb, and what Christ taught Nicodemus, that God implants by a spiritual operation in our hearts the things which concern our peace. This doctrine, taught by the Church in all her sacraments and offices, is the opposite of that which makes supernatural faith, as Bishops Warburton and Thirlwall made it, consist in a logical inference from outward miracles, interrupting Nature, and addressed to the senses. In opposition to the gladiators of an external faith, preferring Nicodemus to Christ, Julius Hare, in his "*Mission of the Comforter,*" p. 354, note N, lays down in harmony with consistent believers in spiritual regeneration, that "the notion that miracles have an argumentative efficacy" belongs to a late age, and is "a materialist hypothesis." Compare the "*Vindication of Luther,*" pp. 77—81. Seek God in doing judgment, loving kindness, and walking humbly with Him; then shall ye know whether these things bring peace.

9. Those that hear His still small voice in solitude, or

10. Are there yet in the house of the wicked treasures of wickedness, and the scant[6] measure that is abominable?

11. Shall I be pure with wicked balances, and with the bag of false weights?

12. Whose wealthy men are full of violence, and her inhabitants have spoken falsehood, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth?

13. Therefore also make I thee sick in smiting thee, in bringing desolation upon thy sins.

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[6] *Scant*; or meagre. The Greek *μὴ πῦρ καὶ οἶκος ἀνόμου*, and the Latin Adhuc *ignis* in domo impii, imply a different (probably a mistaken) conception of the text האש, yet one literally defensible. Comp. Rosenmüller in loco.

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who recognize it when gifted men, giving it human sound and form, lift it aloud in judgment-hall, pulpit, or market-place, will see wisdom, and find salvation. Let nations and governors hear; *or*, let His rod of chastening be recognized, when He sees cause to smite us.

10—12. Alas! how little had the Prophet's contemporaries, or our own, profited by the past lessons of Divine Providence. Men might boast then, as now, of an external and unreal faith, a pompous worship, a Pharisaic disparagement of God's children elsewhere, calling them Gentiles, Heathens, Infidels, but the Prophet's clear eye looked for uprightness, truth, simplicity, and found these in scanty measure.

13—15. So all the calamities which in the later years of Hezekiah succeeded his brilliant dawn, (and those of the reign of Manasseh, if we accept as history the account of his captivity given in 2 Chronicles xxxiii. 11, though not in the book of Kings,) seemed but too well merited by the sins of high and low. Though Christ's gospel does not confirm, so strongly as the Jewish creed maintained, an uniform connexion between moral desert and natural affluence, and

14. When thou eatest, thou shalt not be satisfied, but thou shalt have sinking in thy inside, and when thou takest hold, thou shalt not rescue, and that which thou rescuest, I will give to the sword.

15. When thou sowest, thou shalt not reap: when thou treadest the olive thou shalt not anoint thee with oil; and the grape-juice, thou shalt not drink wine.

16. Yea the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels: in order for me to make thee a desolation, and her inhabitants a hissing, and that ye may bear the reproach of my People.[7]

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[7] *The reproach of my people.* If the text is as the Prophet wrote it, this is one of the passages which imply a dawning conception of distinction between the rude national mass, and its better members. This has struck us

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though the conception of wide law and large arrangement entertained by modern philosophers, is far more favourable to Christ's doctrine, that God makes his rain fall upon the just and the unjust, than to the older doctrine which made fruitful or barren season, political prosperity or disaster, tokens of God's favour or anger, and criterion of man's conduct, there still seems a connexion (the operation of which may not be easily defined,) but in the long run, and on a large scale, a real connexion between the Divine blessings and our fitness to receive them. Our Prophet states this connexion, according to its simplest conception, as it struck a somewhat animal race in a rude age; but the idea should not be thrown aside, so much as re-adapted from a larger point of view.

16. If Micah's hopes for the kingdom of Judah, and its Bethlehemite kings, are disappointed, the reason is, that they partake the guilt of fallen Samaria.

VI.

1. Alas me! for I am become as gatherings of summer fruit, as grape-gleanings of the vintage; there is no cluster to eat: my soul longs for the first ripe fig.

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above in chap. ii. ver. 8, 9, and has been found by interpreters in Joel iii. 16. (A.V. ii. 32). St. Paul's use of this distinction as explaining how the mass of Israel could seem cast off, yet the ancestral promise to the Chosen Race be made good in its spiritually-minded sons, as well as the growth of this Pauline ratiocination into a doctrine of eternal reprobation which the Apostle probably did not contemplate, are famous in Theology. But in the verse now before us, the LXX. have ὀνείδη λαῶν λήψεσθε, *ye shall bear the reproaches of the nations*, and this probably points to what the Prophet originally wrote. Again, to bear the reproach of one, may be interpreted as bearing it, so as to take it away; or as bearing what did not by right belong to the bearer.

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1. The book of Micah's hopeful anticipation is ended. The chapter of his disappointment now follows upon that of moral requirement, which was the condition of his hope's coming true. Jerome says that some conceived Jesus Christ to lament here the little moral fruit of his own deliverance of mankind. Jerome himself conceived the great company of Prophets and Apostles here to utter a like complaint; they have cried, and men have not listened. Jerome's manner of bringing in the Church and Heretics, with his illustrations from Absalom, Ahitophel, Judas, Abimelech and the men of Sichem, Samson and Dalilah, Esau's wife and Rebekah (ingeniously as these are heaped together), bears too little relation to the Prophet's own meaning to be worth pursuing. With more reason, modern critics find in this last chapter (which is somewhat more doubtful in age than the preceding,) a picture of the latter days of Judah's realm, when from Josiah downwards, if not already in Manasseh's time, all things foreboded ruin, and men of that low type which ordinarily becomes worse with calamity, added intestine treacheries,

2. The pitiful is perished out of the land, and there is none upright among men; they all lie in wait for blood, they hunt every man his brother for destruction.[8]

3. Upon evil-doing with both hands, to do good the prince asketh *pay*,[9] and the judge *judgeth* for reward; and the great man, he utters the greediness of his heart.

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[8] *Destruction;* or, with a net.

[9] *To do good the prince asketh pay, i. e.* will be paid for redress: or asks the offender to gratify him with a gift, to screen the crime. The verb *to do good* may depend upon *asketh*.

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delation, and assassination to foreign invasion. We have, however, no proof that Micah did not add this chapter, which may be expounded so as to fall into tolerable unity with the portion gone before. Finding no prospect of the Ephraimite kingdom's restoration to Judah, and little in the conduct of the latter to deserve such accession, the Prophet late in life, or at least after an interval from his earlier song, may have taken up his parable of sorrow, weaving into it complaints of human wrong-doing, and snatches of confidence that God would yet fulfil the hopes which he was unwilling to surrender. If even on the simpler ground of practical religion, we find the aspirations which God's Spirit breathes are but imperfectly fulfilled, and the devotions of the greatest saints imply shortcoming, we need not wonder that in the outward world, which so imperfectly corresponds to our desire and God's idea, there should be a spring-time of hope, followed by an autumn of repining and resignation. It remained only for a loftier faith to teach the Prophet to carry forward his hope beyond the grave, or to fix it in the spiritual realm of the mind, in which the servants of God are kings.

1, 2. A dreary void in the faithful mind corresponds to a land misgoverned by spoilers, if not ravaged by foes.

4. So they entangle[1] [it, *even*] their good as a briar, *and* uprightness more than a thorn hedge.

5. The day of thy watchmen, *even* thy visitation is come; now shall be their perplexity.

6. Trust not in friend; have no confidence in guide; from her that lieth in thy bosom keep the doors of thy mouth.

7. For son dishonoureth father; daughter rises against her mother; bride against her husband's mother; a man's enemies *are* the men of his own household.

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[1] *So they entangle it.* Notwithstanding the difficulty of the affix, I believe the ill-connected verb "*entangle*," belongs to what follows, which otherwise would have no verb. The old Versions here stray much from the Hebrew: possibly had a different text.

3, 4. The (*a*) greatness of the wrong is only a reason with the judge for asking greater benefit to himself as the price of redress. Such (*b*) show of justice as may be got, is so entangled, that to stretch a hand for it is like grasping a thorn; it is twisted in forms, like a hedge of briars. The first (*a*) part of this complaint applied to English judicature in Lord Bacon's time; all ground for the (*b*) second is not yet removed.

5—7. A day of dreariness and alarm comes well-deserved, and divided households afford each other no protection against persecution and tyranny. So it was, when the first followers of Jesus suffered from the established religion of the Jews, (Matt. x. 21). So when fire and sword were let loose in Provence by Innocent III, when Alva desolated the Netherlands, when foreign or Papal counsellors of the unhappy Mary Tudor lighted flames in England. So in a less degree happens, wherever ecclesiastical organisation, or political factions, sow dissension in families, as our own age has seen.

8. Yet will I watch for the ETERNAL; I will long for the God of my salvation; *until* my God listen to me.

9. Rejoice not against me, thou *nation* that hatest me; though I am fallen, I shall arise; though I sit in darkness, the ETERNAL is a light to me.[2]

10.[3] I will bear the anger of the ETERNAL, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my plea, and execute my judgment; until he bring me forth into the light *where* I shall behold his righteousness.

11. So that the *nation* which hated me see it, and shame cover her that said to me, Where is the ETERNAL thy

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[2] Videtur mihi, *juxta literam*, Hierusalem contra Babylonem et cæteras gentes loqui, quæ sibi insultaverant, "Ne lætemini in ruinâ meâ, quia Domino miserante consurgam." . . . . Hactenus Hierusalem . . . Nunc Deus inducitur respondens . . . . Venerunt dies, ut ædificentur maceriæ tuæ, &c. &c. "Nunc veniamus ad intelligentiam Spiritalem, et ipso Spiritu Sancto exponente (. . . .) Videtur mihi *Omnis Anima* Hierusalem, in quâ ædificatum fuit templum Domini, et visio pacis, et notitia Scripturarum; et postea, superata a peccatis, ducta est in Captivitatem tormentisque tradita; dicere contra Babylonem, *i.e.* confusionem hujus mundi, et adversus contrariam fortitudinem quæ huic mundo præsidet, "Noli insultare mihi, inimica mea, quia cecidi, et resurgam; Deus enim "allevat elisos." Hieron. ad h. l. This striking allegory (with which Bunyan's Town of Mansoul may be compared) may have been borrowed by Jerome from Origen, and has passed widely into devotional Theology. It has never been my own desire to blame such applications, differing as they do infinitely in degrees of merit or appropriateness; but to vindicate the natural sense of the Prophets, which I see with sorrow denied, and with amazement its assertors vilified.

[3] The punctuation of these verses (10—13) has been freely varied by me.

8—11. Yet Jerusalem, or Israel, personified by the Prophet, looks through the cloud to her God; acknowledges her own sinfulness, but trusts in his forgiveness to rescue her from insulting foes. The sentiments of Obadiah and of Psalm 137, appear here in a softened form.

God; 12. Let mine eyes look *their fill* upon her; now let her be trodden down as the mire of the streets.

13. The day for building thy fences, that day when the decree shall be removed far, that *is* a day, when unto thee shall come even from Assyria, and from the cities[4] of Egypt, and from Egypt[5] even to the river, and from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain, and the land shall become a desolation for her inhabitants, because of their doings.

14. Feed thy people with thy staff,[6] the flock of thine inheritance, that dwelleth solitarily in the wood, in the

[4] *Cities of Egypt.* Heb. Matzor, or, fortified cities, *i. e.* those of the frontier; but the contra-position of Assyria renders the sense of Egypt more probable, as in Isaiah A.V. xix. 6, and 2 Kings xix. 24; though this Hebrew equivalent of Mizraim may have been formed on a mistaken etymology, as often happens. So the pure Britons called the wilder Celtic tribes *Gwyddhel*, the wild man, or woodsman, distorting the native name Gaul or Kelt, so as to make it a descriptive term. On the other side, the Teutons having Gaulish tribes adjoining them in Italy and France, made the adjective *Galisch*, Teutonic Wälisch, Wälsch, mean, first Italian, then strange-fashioned, or foreign; but not quite a synonym for *fremd*. Of course, no people calls itself foreign.

[5] *Egypt.* Or, from the fortress of the frontier.

[6] The 14th verse may be divided in the middle, as a prayer from the Prophet, followed by the Divine answer: *e.g.* "Feed them," and "let them feed:" or may better be taken as Divine command that the Prophet

13. The Prophet comforts his country, by anticipating the restoration of her defences (as we often read in the later Psalms), and holds out a hope of men's coming to her from many countries. These whom he expects, are, as I believe, not merely returning exiles, but foreigners bringing tribute, or coming to worship; while the land which is to be desolate, is not Palestine, but the land of the strangers: so at least I believe, with Maurer; but the stream of commentators is the other way, almost all thinking Palestine intended.

14. The Prophet cannot surrender the hope, that God

midst of Carmel; let them feed *in* Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old; as in the days of thy going forth from the land of Egypt, I will cause him to see wonders;

15. The nations shall see and be confounded[7] out of all their might; they shall set their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf;

16. They shall lick dust like serpents, like worms of the earth, they shall creep out of their fortresses; they shall turn trembling to the ETERNAL our God, and fear before thee.

17. Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity, and passing over the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance; he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in kindness.

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should feed, and promise that he shall be blessed in doing so; but better still, as a prayer throughout, that the Eternal Shepherd of nations and of men's souls would feed the scattered remnant, like stray sheep in the wilder downs. "*I will cause him to see,*" may be prayer vividly expressing itself as promise: as the Psalmist prays, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation:" so here we may understand, "Let thy words be," but the Greek is ὄψεσθε; and the form in the Hebrew Text is questioned.

[7] *Confounded*, not at Israel's might; but so as to lose their own.

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will yet be shepherd of Israel, pasture them in their old dwelling-places, shew them marvels, as when Moses brought them out of the house of slaves. I confess the general tone of this passage, in sentiments and words, suits the beginning of the Babylonian exile, better than Micah's time.

15, 16. The same anticipation, or yearning, as in the 13th verse, is here continued.

17—19. As in all extremity, when human means fail, God is our last refuge, the Prophet anticipating, or having already beheld, the decay of earthly hopes, throws him-

18. Even He will have compassion on us again ; he will subdue our iniquities ; and thou wilt cast into the depths of the sea all their sins.

19. Thou wilt shew faithfulness to Jacob, kindness to Abraham, as thou hast sworn to our fathers from the days of old.

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[8] *Subdue ;* or, wash away.

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self upon God : not, as Christ and his Apostle Paul teach us, for an unfading inheritance in heaven, or communion with the Eternal Spirit, but for a restoration of the land so well loved, which Abraham's wanderings had hallowed with prayer, and the promise of which seemed to the Hebrew "an everlasting covenant." Those who feel bound still to retain this hope for the Jews, should remember that the New Testament, the Christian Fathers with a vast majority of voices, and all our older and more consistent Divines, have transfigured these earthly promises into a spiritual birthright of the Church of Christ. However correct the Jewish interpretation of the Palæstinian covenant may so far be, there is an irreconcilable inconsistency on the part of Christians who maintain the Church to be now the spiritual Jerusalem, and at the same time contend that the earthly Jerusalem must be restored. Again, a national life of six centuries from the return under Cyrus to the fall under Titus, especially when followed by the power of peaceable settlement in the more civilised and enlightened countries of the world, may be considered as ample a fulfilment of the ancient Prophet's prayers, or predictions, as even upon the strictest theory need have been expected.

ON THE VERSIONS.

That the variations of the Greek from the Hebrew text are specially great in Micah, was acknowledged anciently by Jerome, (see his Note on ch. ii.) and is conceded by still stricter commentators now. There is almost a want of reverence in Dr. Pusey's saying (i. 10), though truly, that "the LXX. is full of blunders." Yet to the deliberate preference for its "blunders" entertained by the Primitive Church, I fear we owe the loss of other more correct Versions.

In i. 4. The high places of Judah are fairly translated *ἁμαρτία, sin,* which is the idea intended.

In i. 9, the *οἱ ἐν ακεὶμ* is famous as suggesting the probable loss of some city's name. See Note (i. 9.)

i. 12. "Bind the chariot," becomes the sound of chariots, *ψόφος ἁρμάτων,* which if possible is unlikely.

i. 13. "Give presents," or as it may be taken, "acknowledge a divorce for the possession of Gath," (or M. G.) is in the Greek *δώσει ἐξαποστελλομένους;* a version so evidently implying ignorance of the idiomatic meaning of the Hebrew, that it brings back upon me the weariness with which, notwithstanding the possible use of occasionally extracting remarkable renderings, I often turn from this task of selection. Let us pass on a little.

i. 14, To Adullam shall return the glory, &c., seems given rightly, *εὡς Ὀδολλὰμ ἥξει ἡ δόξα, κ. τ. λ.*

ii. 6. The delicate idiom of dropping speech for teaching is changed by the LXX. into weeping.

At the end of chapter ii., as in common editions, (or as given above, ii. 13, 14,) the Greek confirms the view that the passage is more narrative than predictive; *διέκοψαν καὶ διῆλθον πύλην, καὶ ἐξῆλθον δι' αὐτῆς, καὶ ἐξηλθεν ὁ βασιλεὺς αὐτῶν πρὸ προσώπου αὐτῶν, ὁ δὲ Κύριος ἡγήσεται*

αὐτῶν καὶ ἐρεῖ, Ἀκούσατε, κ. τ. λ. Not so, however, the Latin.

iii. 3. (A. V. iii. 7) the striking taunt, that the flattering Prophets had no answer from God, is changed by the LXX. into οὐκ ἔσται ὁ ἐπακούων αὐτῶν, a version implying that *Elohim*, the Hebrew for God, was read as if *Aleihem*, the pronoun plural for them. In the next verse, "I am filled with strength," becomes ἐὰν μὴ ἐμπλήσω ἰσχυν. Two verses lower, thou that buildest, is translated freely as a plural, οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες. The complaint against greedy Prophets then assumes a purely narrative form.

iii. 11. In the vision of the latter days, I have followed the Greek in turning many nations into mighty races, ἔθνη ἰσχυρὰ, a possible interpretation, and I think, the truest.

iii. 16. *Migdal-eder* disappears as a name in the Greek, Καὶ σὺ πύργος ποιμνίου αὐχμώδης, θυγάτηρ Σιὼν, where Sion is addressed. Nor is the disappearance much less complete in the Latin, "Et tu turris gregis nebulosa filiæ Sion"—long before such versions were made, a transmuting tradition had been busy with obliteration and encroachment. Even if the Chaldee were earlier (as used to be assumed, but may well be doubted) the arbitrary interpretation "*And thou, Messiah of Israel,*" proves nothing but the embarrassment of its authors.

In the same verse the Greek has the curious interpolation, ἐκ Βαβυλῶνος, which I know not whether to consider a Greek gloss, or as significant of what may have once stood in the Hebrew, though perhaps introduced subsequently to the authorship, as seems likely, with the 2nd verse of ch. iv.

iv. 7 (A. V. v. 2.) Καὶ σὺ Βηθλεέμ οἶκος Ἐφραθὰ ὀλιγοστὸς εἶ τοῦ εἶναι ἐν χιλιάσιν Ἰουδα. Vulg. Et tu, Bethlehem Ephrata, parvulus es in millibus Juda.

iv. 11. (A. V. v. 6.) Καὶ ποιμανοῦσι τὸν Ἀσσοὺρ ἐν

ρομφαίᾳ, καὶ τὴν γῆν τοῦ Νεβρὼδ ἐν τῇ τάφρῳ αὐτῆς. See Note above.

The Latin of Jerome seems more than usually careful in Micah. One of its most remarkable variations is in ch. ii. 1, where instead of "it is in the power of their hand," we have "Contra Deum est manus eorum;" as also the Greek has οὐκ ἦραν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν χεῖρας αὐτῶν. This concurrence of versions so ancient, and in renderings so possible, yet so untrue, may seem, like the contradiction of Commentators, to render Hebrew interpretation uncertain. Its truer lesson should be the necessity of observing idiom. For the verbal substantive יֶשׁ is not used as a mere *copula*, but carries an idea of substantial presence; nor does the prepos. לְ mean against; whereas the whole phrase is often used of power residing in any one's hand. Similarly in Psalm ii. 12, 'Kiss the Son' as a rendering of נַשְּׁקוּ־בַר violates grammatical idiom for want of a preposition, and dialectic idiom by supposing the Syro-chaldaic word *Bar* used for Son. On the contrary, in Psalm xxii. 17, no idiom is violated by following the text of the genuine MSS. If of these three passages the two latter are thought more disputable than the first; it is not because philology is uncertain, but because it is mixed with other considerations.

The preservation of the past tense in nine verses out of the second chapter, has been noticed in favour of the historical sense—"*Concupierunt agros*," &c.

vi. 3. Without insisting that my version of this difficult verse is right, I think the Latin must be wrong; "Malum manuum suarum dicunt bonum; princeps postulat, et judex in reddendo est;" yet the idea implied is not dissimilar.

vi. 8. "Ne læteris, inimica mea." The feminine marks a hostile nation. So in v. 10.

vi. 11. Dies, ut ædificentur maceriæ tuæ: in die illâ longe fiet lex. In die illâ et usque ad te veniet de Assur, et

usque ad civitates munitas ; et a civitatibus munitis usque ad flumen. This is a possible version, but not, I think, the preferable one.

In Micah I have been enabled to compare occasionally with other aids the commentary of Hitzig. My obligations in other respects remain as before ; although contemporaneous events have suggested fuller dissertation.

INTRODUCTION TO ISAIAH.

The Prophets hitherto treated have presented comparatively simple questions of interpretation. We enter in Isaiah a larger field, in which the arrangement is often doubtful; the authorship of parts disputed; a succession of questions arises, not unlikely to open our minds to the idea that Hebrew literature has descended to us but in fragments. The reader will find it convenient to have the elements of so complex a topic distributed under the passages in which they arise. Some apprehension of the nature of the case may be conveyed here.

The reign of Uzziah, extending prosperously over two years beyond the half century, B.C. 808 to 756, was yet clouded in its close by the king's leprosy, during which his son Jotham represented him. Succeeding his father in the year conventionally called 756, Jotham reigned prudently sixteen years. The less happy reign of Ahaz follows, during the period from 741, to what must be here called 726, (by others 728, and as late as 714). The Scripture account is, that Ahaz began to reign when 20 years old, reigned 16 years, and died at 36, leaving a son aged 25. It would follow that he had become a father when only eleven years old, unless we suppose, as a less difficulty, that *twenty-five* is a slip of the text (2 Kings xviii. 2,) for *fifteen*, which is otherwise a probable age for Hezekiah at his father's death.[1]

Hezekiah's reign, the most pious, in some respects the

[1] Hence a well-known chronological argument of Bishop Pearson's in reference to Isaiah ix. can hardly be relied upon.

most glorious, since the disruption of the two realms, lasted twenty-nine years, 726—696. His religious policy was reversed by his successor Manasseh, who not only favoured the freer worship of Jehovah in the high places as well as in Jerusalem, but is classed with the Samaritan Ahab, as a worshipper of Baal, and set up an image of Astarte, or Asherah, (A. V. 'Grove,') in the courts of the Temple. If we might trust the fabulous form in which the Gemara records the tradition of Isaiah's death, it would seem that Manasseh retained sufficient respect for the Mosaic law, to sentence the Prophet for contradicting it, as *e.g.* by his bold figure of 'seeing God' (vi. 5), he might be held to contradict Exodus xxxiii. 20, 'No man sees me, and lives.' But the passages quoted by Gesenius, (*Einl.* § 1. pp. 10—12.) shew the earliest form of the tradition to have been '*Manasseh put Isaiah to death;*' to which the sawing asunder in a hollow cedar-tree was added later. What here concerns us, is that the limits of the Prophet's activity lie between the last year of Uzziah and a date, probably early, in Manasseh's reign. This period included the invasions of Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, and Sennacherib, and saw a shadow pass over the Assyrian empire in the still brilliant reign of Esar-haddon. Having observed the Assyrian discoveries change their aspect more than once during the progress of this work, I wish to guard against its suffering from any future change by a respectful neutrality. The reader will notice, if he adopts Mr. Rawlinson's chronology, *Anc. Mon.* cap. ix. vol. ii. p. 291, that the events of Hezekiah's reign must be brought some fourteen, or more, years lower, to correspond with Sennacherib's invasion. This in some systems is adopted. Our leading dates therefore may be—

	B.C.
Uzziah's death	756 or 747
Tiglath-Pileser in Galilee . .	747—5 „ 733
Accession of Ahaz . . .	741 „ 730
Rezin and Pekah . . .	740 „ 729
Fall of Damascus . . .	738 „ 727
Accession of Hezekiah . .	726 „ 714
Fall of Samaria	721 „ 709
Sennacherib, first invasion . .	713 „ 701
———— second . . .	711 „?698—92
Sennacherib's death . . .	710 „ 680
Accession of Manasseh . .	697 „ 686

Some interest attaches to the history of Sargana and the relations borne to him possibly by generals, whom we usually consider kings; but any preference which the reader may accord to either of the above or similar systems appears remarkably destitute of bearing upon the deeper import, moral or religious, of the Bible. That the introducers of the new views invite us to alter the sacred text, in 2 Kings xviii. 13, from *fourteenth* into *twenty-seventh*, in order to suit their Assyrian calculations, needs not be fatal, but does not prepossess me in their favour. Mr. Rawlinson admits, vol. ii. pp. 434—445, the Assyrian and Hebrew numbers to be irreconcilable.

In the sixth chapter we have a magnificent vision, giving shape to the Prophet's recollection of his first call to the service of God. Since he had been called in the last year of a prosperous reign, it is evident that the desolation described in our first chapter could not have preceded the call recorded in our sixth, even if the work of preaching could have preceded a call to it. Hence it has been thought right by some to commence their arrangement of the works of Isaiah, with our sixth chapter, and to place the

five earlier chapters, in an order new, but suggested to them by internal correspondence with certain epochs. Again, the second chapter of our book is on the face of it nearly identical with one in Micah; therefore must be wrongly arranged in Isaiah, or borrowed either by him or by Micah, unless both borrowed it from some one before them. As we proceed, we find ch. xiv. (A. V. xv. and xvi.) confessedly quoted by the writer, that is, I suppose, Isaiah, from a far older denunciation by some prophet unknown. A circumstance, somewhat different, may strike us in the xiiith chapter. A fragment of promise that the Assyrian shall be broken, there appears, like a splinter of rock, detached from the mass of predication affecting Assyria which we had found in chapters x. xi., and separated from it, as by an intervening boulder, by the splendid song of triumph over Babylon. I shall ask, lower down, how far it could have been natural for Isaiah just then to mention Babylon, but here speak of arrangement. We may next notice about seven chapters, xiii. to xx. in this volume, (A. V. xiv.—xxiii.) in which fragmentary utterances on different nations are recorded, with nothing that should tempt us to deny Isaiah their authorship for the most part, yet little to warrant us in supposing their arrangement chronological; rather with circumstances implying otherwise. After this collection comes a group of chapters xxi.—xxiii. (A. V. xxiv.—xxvii.) which, though perfectly canonical, we shall find reasons unconnected with theories of prediction for thinking written at a time subsequent to Isaiah. Once more, a group of chapters, xxiv.—xxvii. (A. V. xxviii.—xxxiii.) will occur, recalling so decisively the Prophet of the Vision and the grand denunciations of the earliest chapters of the book, that the writer's identity is beyond doubt. We then relapse for two chapters, xxix. xxx. into a vindictive strain upon Edom, which is open to

the same kind of criticism as the 137th Psalm would be if it were arranged in the middle of Isaiah's denunciations of Sennacherib; which in other words we are induced by mixed considerations to place in a category of doubtfulness as regards authorship. Whether the historical chapters which follow chap. xxx. &c. (A. V. xxxvi. &c.) were written by Isaiah, and from him transcribed, or written in the book of Kings by a recorder, as Joah, Asaph's son, and transferred as an illustration to Isaiah's works, must be judged by comparison of the passages, taking into account 2 Chron. xxxii. 32, and 2 Kings xviii. 18. It is certain that all beyond the xxxixth chapter of the Anglican Version is distinguishable in style and subject by marks of time, the full import of which will disclose itself upon investigation.

The more any one considers such an arrangement as has been described, the more he will be led to feel its fragmentary character. My own work being governed by the principle of making as little change as possible, I should hardly venture to adopt all the conjectural improvements which critics have suggested in the order of collocation, if even I were more convinced than I am of their certainty. In truth it seems to me far from certain, if even it be consistent with the laws of religious development, that the Prophet should record poetically his calling in the same year in which it happened; and if he had done so, he might still preserve the record, until opportunity offered for its insertion in a work of a larger character; that is, in such a collection of his sayings, as might derive from it significance, and appear as the result of the crisis through which his mind had passed. If we read under the guidance of such a hint the first eleven chapters, then, (whatever we may think of the fragment in the second chapter,) we shall hardly fail to observe an unity, even if we doubt

whether it is due to the author, or to his editors. In either case, it comes down from a date too near his time, for us to have the right of disturbing it. The same remark will apply to the five chapters, xxiv. &c. which commence with denunciation of the drunkards of Ephraim. A conclusion not very dissimilar, may lead us hardly to disarrange the 'Burdens,' or Utterances, upon Damascus, Egypt, Tyre, xiv.—xx.; and only in one instance have I ventured to do so.

We must arrive at a different verdict, after fully considering the denunciations on Babylon, chap. xii. on Edom, xxix. and xxx. and the three chapters describing the desolations during the Exile, or following it, xxi.—xxiii. I will not here repeat the reasons, (which I have sufficiently given under each passage, and which in larger works may be found detailed more fully than my readers would wish,) by obedience to which my judgment is determined. If hereafter it should be thought right to arrange these manifestly later portions apart from the primary Isaiah, by placing them after the account of Hezekiah's sickness and the embassy from Babylon, such a course would tend to apprehension of the sense of the Bible. In the mean time, without disputing, whether profounder scholars have carried decomposition of Isaiah farther than evidence requires, (certainly farther than in my state of information I am prepared to follow,) I hope to give such aids as will enable readers to apprehend the nature of the problem.

A patristic error, which Jerome refuted, though most (*plerique*) of his contemporaries received it, made Amotz, Isaiah's father, the same as the prophet Amos. A Rabbinical fable, which Kimchi rejected (Ges. i. l.), made Amotz brother, the prophet consequently nephew, to king Amaziah. An Arabic legend, (Ges. p. 6.), which may be founded on a true conception of the Prophet's character, represents him as not checking the assumption of the

priestly office by Uzziah; and on that account suffering interruption of his prophetical gifts. If any such tradition, beyond the limits of his own book, contain the faintest vestige of history, it is the story of his being sawn asunder by orders of king Manasseh, under whom he would be likely to suffer. The earliest source to which the story has been traced is the *Ascensio Isaiæ*, a highly apocryphal book, which Abp. Lawrence has edited.

In truth, Isaiah has written in his own works whatever we are likely to know, or need know, of his life. We there find him highly gifted, poetical, devout; evidently trained, we know not how, with the perfection of such training as the schools of the Prophets in their highest bloom could afford; personally attached to the ideal of the religious system which he had received, but dissatisfied with its realisation by its official administrators; occasionally not incapable of assuming the part of a politician, but having as the key-note of his policy a profound trust in God, with a sense alike of his nation's sacredness and its unworthiness, and a strong hope, that when the dross was purged, judgment would leave metal behind; or that a better generation would grow up to be spared, such as he saw, with a father's eye, commencing in his own children, or with a patriot's hope conceived embodied in Hezekiah, and gathering around his throne. Conscious of having been called to the service of God as early as the last year of Uzziah,(ch. vi.) he has left little sign of activity within the following reign of Jotham; more striking proofs of it during the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah. The great body of his utterances falls loosely into two masses, grouping themselves around the Syro-Ephraimite war (ch. vii.) and the series of Assyrian invasions. (ch. viii.—xx.) In both cases, the counsel of Isaiah seems justified by the event: for although a disturbing element is introduced by the

discrepant statement in 2 Chron. xxviii. 6—16, the earlier account in 2 Kings xv. and xvi., implies in connexion with Isaiah vii. 7, that the confederacy failed. More confidently we may affirm the memorable failure of Sennacherib; and that by an overthrow of such a kind, as to justify the tenor of counsels, which had not pointed to chariots of war, or fortifying the wall (ch. xix.), but to quietness and confidence in God. Little as we know, how far particular songs or expressions of the Prophet were elaborated antecedently to the event, there is hardly a possibility of doubting that the tendency of his influence would be what the record affirms it to have been. His life was a prophecy, if not his Ode on Sennacherib's fall. Probably this is the strongest instance in favour of that theory which seriously ascribes to the Prophets a supernatural mission, comprehending the disposal of kingdoms and armies, as well as the spiritual reformation of nations. If it be asked, since one prediction has an appearance of fulfilment, may not many more have been fulfilled; I have no desire to maintain the negative, and did not undertake this work with a view of doing so, but will state lower down the apparent tendency of research on the subject. There can be no harm in believing Prophecy: but great harm in distorting Scripture, to create it.

With whatever confidence Isaiah foresaw a clear issue to either one of conflicting counsels, he conceived his mission to comprehend the prescription of policy to the realm in no less, probably in a larger, measure than the prediction of events. To what righteous ends a king should reign, what princes or nobles should surround him in council, how sacred a function, and yet on account of its sacredness how responsible to man, the priest should wield, what blessings, reaching to the utmost bounds of poetic imagination, might be expected from the righteousness of God upon

obedience of Israel, are burdens successively of his precept, protestation, presentiment. Hence a full intelligence of his book would include some apprehension of the kind of commonwealth which floated before his mind's eye. If not rigidly Mosaic, it would recall in its dislike to great social inequalities and their outward signs, the prescriptions of the earlier law. It is more wholesome for the general reader to fasten upon the religious feeling, which was to be the salt of the whole; or more accurately, the sense of responsibility to God, which was to comprehend all relations of life. Not what we distinguish as feeling from action; not what we oppose as religion to morality, or prefer as piety to duty—at least not mere emotion, cultivated for its own value, and priding itself on its delicacy — constituted the religion of Isaiah. Rather a profound awe of a God, whose name is thrice Holy, and the flash of an intuitive inference that righteousness and kindness are dearer to Him than ceremonies and formulas, prompt the words which suggest our earliest, and confirm our latest, impression of the Prophet's mind: "Cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

Though Isaiah's kingdom is as emphatically of this world, as Christ's is of a heavenly world, he is almost as free from technical doctrine as Christ. He teaches with that authority which speaks straight to the heart. Tradition of the past is employed by him to touch the imagination, not to burden the intellect. The law of Moses he hardly seems to mention. The Sabbath he just touches to disparage it. Ritual he seems to have loved, for he transports it into the spiritual presence of the King eternal, invisible: but he subordinates it to the offering of a conscience undefiled. Hence he supports that idea of Revela-

tion, which represents it as finding an echo, almost part of itself, in the better instincts and wants of our nature: in contradistinction to that harder outline as of a skeleton which professes itself by nature incredible, if miracle or terror did not enforce it as a mystery. It does not follow, that the Church, as a Society, is not justified in framing, as conditions of union, propositions embodying for scholastical convenience the logical side of what appears in Prophet or Apostle as a spiritual emotion. A recoil which we have to dread from unhallowed suppression, is that men, finding how coarsely they have been misled, may believe nothing; or that sentiment may evaporate in garrulity, for want of a dialectical framework. He, in whose image we are made, sees intellectual truth, and may ordain it for the confirmation of our minds, as really as He is the fountain of love, by which our hearts are comforted. Still, it is good to remember, that whatever may be reasonable for churches, God has made, in the last resort, the conditions of salvation simple. When men who do not feel true spiritual emotion, or feel it as an aid to ecclesiastical dominion, confound with it syllogisms of the schools and figures of rhetoric, as equally by immediate utterance Divine, the most tragical complications arise for societies and for the secret heart. The eternal power of the Prophets springs ever fresh, not from whatever gift of prediction they may extraordinarily have possessed, but from that which they have in common with ourselves, their sight of God, their hatred of tyranny and hypocrisy, their courage in denouncing wrong, their awe-stricken prayerfulness, their poetical fire, their manly generosity. Isaiah is the Evangelical Prophet, because he joins the Divine and the human which Christ pre-eminently joined; speaking by a measure of the Eternal Spirit, which God gave to Jesus not by measure. If he had lived under the

new Covenant he would have accepted the mind of Christ as the expression of Deity, the impersonate Word of God.

The extent to which Isaiah interposed in the policy of his times, resembling in that respect Ambrose, and the more statesmanlike of the Fathers, renders it natural to ask, what would have been his judgment on some of the questions of our age. We can hardly imagine the developments of our commerce, our colonies on every sea, our boundless luxury, with abject poverty by its side, as entering into his conception. Yet the sentiments in which his large genius would have indulged, are too clear from the expressions which he uses of Tyre and her merchant princes; we may fear that much explanation from our economists would have been needed to reconcile him to some of our social inequalities. We may be too sure, no explanation would have induced him to tolerate such laws of entail, as transmit encumbered and unimproved estates, with an inheritance of debt, while by logical necessity they render the tiller of the soil little better in physical well-being than the serf, sometimes in moral aspiration than the cattle which he drives. This remark should not be understood, as if we were bound in the light of the Gospel and of reason to consider the arrangements of Providence exhausted by the economy of Palestine; only if arrangements change, moral principles are permanent; at least it would be well, amidst professions of devotion to the Bible, not to close the eyes of our mind altogether to what the sacred writers would have said, had they been writing of ourselves. Again, as regards provision for the external maintenance of religion, nothing is clearer than that whatever theory excludes religion from the commonwealth, leaving men to guess what should be right in their own eyes, would have seemed to the Prophet national atheism. By Divine Right he would

have Parliaments or Presidents, no less than Princes, govern and be governed, and the Priest's lips keep knowledge. He would not have expected the living coal from the altar to touch the lips of crazy volubility in preference to those of a rightful officer. Yet no system which hardened itself in a tradition of forms, or suppressed fresh truths, and confessed itself a stranger to inspiration, and incapable of profiting by experience, could have satisfied him. He might, in an historically descended society, have borne Articles, but few, and not inconsistent with each other or with their adjuncts; prayers he would probably have had fixed, but not without elasticity of provision for circumstances and for creative devotion; whatever Creed he had beyond a promise to fear the living God, would have been neither a forgery, nor have contained malediction. Most alien of all from his mind, would have been an ecclesiastical system without faith in the unseen, or one which broadens religion by depriving it of all which breathes life. He would as little understand the claim of a majority, as that of a Priesthood, to decide what only God can make true.

If we spend a thought upon the opponents of Isaiah, we shall do well to remember, their case is not before us. As the fuller records of the new Covenant exhibit Apostles at strife, so analogy suggests, that great searchings of heart may have divided men worthy of a place in the Old Testament Canon. They knew in part, and prophesied in part. We see from the case of Shebna, whom the pious Hezekiah upheld in a place of trust, after he had been denounced by Isaiah, and with whom the Prophet himself seems to have been obliged to co-operate, that men not enjoying his approval may have retained the esteem of their contemporaries. He triumphed over such, as Demosthenes triumphed over Æschines, and in Anglican

estimation Hooker over Cartwright, or as the views of three several Apostles have found favour in several ages or provinces of Christendom; but his style and that of Prophets most opposed to him must have had expressions in common; principles differently applied, but having root in a common endeavour to divine the mysterious will of God. The only respect in which the evidences of religion seem to have failed, is the assumption that God condemns those whom we condemn for differing from us. All the analogies of Providence suggest, that we have light enough to walk by; not enough to warrant disparagement of our neighbours. Even the rivalry of a higher against a lower faith has in it something of idolatry. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. By their fruits shall you know men. Judge not, that you be not judged. Bless, and curse not; for this is our calling, to inherit a blessing in well-doing.

Passing from Amos or Hosea to Isaiah, is like turning from Howell Harries or George Fox to Jeremy Taylor or South. We leave the simple for the ornate, childlike trust in God for a richer form of religion, a style reflecting the common idioms of speech, for one of refined, even elaborate poetry. Those who doubt in art whether the exquisite finish of Raffaele has not lost something of the mystical tenderness which hallows the canvass of his less accomplished precursors, may feel amid the studied antithesis which points the imagery of Isaiah, an inclination to turn back to his simpler forerunners. He is their equal in genius, but hardly gains by being their superior in art. The bulk of the writings associated with his name (as Jerome remarks that he equals the Twelve Minor Prophets in amount), perhaps the superior poetry of some portions ascribed to him without discrimination,

may as much as intrinsic excellence have given him the greatest place among the Prophets. He hardly surpasses Joel in flow, Amos in sublimity, Hosea in tenderness. The rank, however, ascribed to him by critics is indisputably the first. His prominence in the counsels of the realm, the triumphant issue to his denunciations of Sennacherib, may have contributed to this verdict. His own genius, his courageous patriotism, his finished style, did much to merit it. Hence, in Spanish manuscripts of the Canon, we are told by scholars conversant with abstruser Jewish antiquities, that his writings hold the first place, although in the correspondent MSS. of France and Germany he is[1] postponed to Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Some tradition in that dim region of Talmudic lore, which hardly any general scholar can traverse without disproportionate absorption, but which native Hebraists, if they waive Rabbinical trifling, might lay open, may have suggested to whoever arranged the MSS. of Northern Europe, that some of the writings ascribed to Isaiah are later than the captivity, therefore later than Jeremiah and Ezekiel. However this may be, (and the point is one on which I gladly await information,) the internal evidence of the Bible, ever our highest court of appeal, unmistakably shews, that not all is Isaiah's, which is called after Isaiah. Resembling so far Shakespeare and Homer, if there was an archetypal Homer, his renown absorbed into its vortex writings without a name, not inferior in sublimity to his own. Probably this was the case with our second chapter; probably with the twelfth chapter, upon

[1] "Nach dem Talmudischen (Tr. *Baba Bathra*, f. 14.) in der deutschen und französischen Handschriften beobachteten Kanon, Jesaia, nach Jeremiah und Ezekiel, deren Bücher früher abgeschlossen worden sind, steht, und unter den Propheten die dritte stelle einnimmt." Knobel. E. H. p. xxiv. (quoting also Semler's edition of Elias Levita, and Buxtorff's *Tiberias*).

Babylon; probably with the twenty-ninth and thirtieth chapters, upon Edom; certainly with the three chapters, xxi—xxiii. which describe the mourning of the Land during the Exile, or shortly after it; certainly with the entire book (for it is a book) of unsurpassed grandeur, which celebrates the Return in harmony with the presentiments of Jehovah's servants, and which is ordinarily arranged in sequel to the extracts from the book of Kings. Although I postpone arguments in respect of this last portion, their tenor will be divined by whoever masters what is said on the chapters of Babylon and Idumæa. Important as these questions are to a full intelligence of the monuments of our faith, and bearing upon interests too sacred for perfunctory assumption, they leave us happily, in whatever way a calmer age may resolve them, without detriment to our power of honouring the memory, and imbibing the spirit, of the great Prophet with whom we are concerned. His genius and his faith will survive all changes of fashion; all chances of time; those who share his trust will find it not fail them; those who serve his God, not merely the Lord of Israel, but the Eternal God of all the isles of the sea, the refuge of our fathers and our own throughout all generations, will have in Him a shield, and an exceeding great reward.

It will be the happiness of men hereafter to be able to fasten on the religious element in Isaiah, building themselves on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, without disturbance from thorny controversies. The confusion into which Biblical studies have fallen in England, the small number of scholars who have investigated, the still smaller who dare to explain, and the power, not always fairly used, of imputing gratuitous assumption or heretical belief to whoever walking like a child, as God's hand shall lead him, reports to inquirers what he

has found, render it a sacred duty to raise two questions, which to scholars more happily placed may seem superfluous. How far does Isaiah contain, not in possibility, but in reality demonstrable by proof, supernatural prediction of events which could not have been foreseen by any exaltation of faith or foreboding? How far, again, does Jesus of Nazareth appear personally predicted as the Messiah of Israel or of Mankind?

On the first of these questions, I will state the tendency of research, without aiming at dogmatic negation. We have seen in the case of Sennacherib, denunciations verified. I incline to consider this a remarkable instance of faith justified by the event; but hardly find it demonstrable that the expectation went beyond foreboding, or that the result transcended the limits of a marvellous Providence. For in order to establish a proof of extra-natural intervention by way of prediction and miracle, we need fuller knowledge than we possess of the relation borne by the finished poems in our volume to the original utterances of Isaiah in point of form, and to the specified events in point of time. Even if no adverse conclusion be suggested by the circumstance that the disaster took place not in Palestine, (Isaiah xiii. 1,) but in the Egyptian desert, (Herod. ii. 141,) or by the inference drawn from Assyrian inscriptions that Sennacherib survived the loss of his army with little diminution of power, for seventeen years, leaving then a prosperous kingdom to his son, (Rawlinson, *Ass. Mon.* ix.) the absence of the knowledge above desiderated is absence of evidence, and in such absence a positive affirmation can hardly be reached without predisposition. A more distinct instance of apparent prediction is vii. 8, where the dissolution of Ephraim as a people is foretold within sixty-five years. Since, however, Ephraim was dissolved in about twenty years (see Notes), and the

land repeopled by colonists, instead of dispeopled, at a later date under Esar-haddon, the fulfilment is more than difficult to trace. Other reasons will be found for considering the passage exceptional (see Notes). Again, there are chapters of denunciation upon Babylon: but their date is, upon independent though conjectural grounds, more naturally fixed at a date too low for prediction, than at one which would justify it; others upon Edom, as xxix. xxx. to which the same remark applies; or in which no clear issue seems presented to the writer's own mind, xviii. 11, 12. Once more, there are so many woes and burthens upon different lands in succession, that in the course of ages a soil traversed by invaders could hardly fail to experience various fulfilments; but anything like definite prediction of event followed by realisation—in those countries which the Prophets describe, any more than in others which they do not describe—at least such as might serve as a basis for demonstration of extra-natural intervention, is probably impossible to substantiate. I say dialectical demonstration; especially as assumed to be a safer ground for faith than pious experience or moral fitness; nay to be so evident, that law human or Divine obliges to discover it. I do not speak of reverential associations, or inclination to trust beyond the sphere of logical proof one who has a perpetual witness as the Prophet has, in the nobleness of his religious tone. Those who have noticed with regret the Church in successive generations retreating from positions which she once occupied, but which she loses with no detriment, beyond the shame of having misrepresented those who contested them, will divine by an ingenuous instinct, how many claims in this region require to be moderated.

The second, the Messianic question, is really simple, but may have given to it an appearance of complexity.

No Messiah of the traditional type maintained in *Pearson on the Creed* is mentioned or implied throughout Isaiah. Whole chapters breathe the spirit of Christ, the righteousness which he prescribes, the hopes which he encourages, the trust which he inspires. The glad anticipations which the Prophet attached to the birth of his children, ("*I, and my children,*" he says, "*which the Lord has given me,*") and to that of a Prince destined to rear once more the throne of David, animate passages which it was natural for the Church to apply to a child of greater hope, and the founder of a spiritual kingdom. The perpetual adjournment to the future of Mankind's unquenchable longing for the felicity freed from shackles of our finite state which hope or faith suggests as ultimate design of the Author of all goodness, breaks forth in the Prophet's abundance of imagery, part of which, as *the lion's eating straw,* must always remain imagery, and part, as that of *the nations learning war no more,* still awaits a calmer time, a larger education, a more practical gospel of goodwill amongst men. Some portions, again, are so local and temporal, as the exaltation of Mount Zion above other mountains, that our own Master, Christ, the only infallible interpreter, has reversed them by his doctrine, and taught His followers, that the fulfilment of such things lies in their expansion; hence they fulfil in such a sense as that in which the forest of to-day fulfils the acorn of a millennium ago. Indeed, Christianity is truer than its evidences. Believe in Christ's life and doctrine; you will see how the lisping utterances of a province grew from childhood to a world-wide stature of spiritual manhood; but commence on the dialectical side of Hermeneutics, you will find your proof fail, or violate the Old Testament to create it. Being engaged here as an interpreter of the Prophets, or at most as vindicator of their sense, I need not linger over the apologetic

aspect in reference to Christianity, which I have expounded hortatorily in my *Rational Godliness*, more meditatively in my *Christianity and Hinduism*, and under the pressure of misrepresentation and something more, been obliged too often to travel over.[1] If the reasoning of those volumes, substantiated here by version, does not leave the "argument from Prophecy" a nobler, truer, subsidiary to our faith, than common Manuals of 'evidences,' I will hope that the failure lies in my weakness, not in the necessity of the case. Nothing better, preserving the good faith of Hermeneutics, occurs to me. We may be infinitely accountable to God for our belief, and to the Church for our teaching; but the one does not ask, the other ought not to wish, any advocacy but such as may be used *salvo pudore*—such as an honest client desires, and an honourable advocate employs. If, because the argument is difficult, misrepresentation must be invoked, I had rather suffer, than be guilty of it.

Those who wish development of this point, cannot do better than read St. Jerome, whose mingled learning and extravagances are highly instructive. He can be sane, as when he acknowledges the pious intention of those who

[1] (1.) *Rational Godliness, i.e.* Sermons Exegetical and Practical. Cambridge. 1855.

(2.) *Christianity and Hinduism, i.e.* A Discussion of the Theory of Revelation. *Ibid.* 1856.

(3.) *Christian Freedom*, and a Review of the Bishop of Llandaff's Charge. *Ibid.* 1857.

(4.) *A Letter to the Bishop of St. David's.* On the Difficulty of bringing Theological Questions to an issue. *Ibid.* 1860.

(5.) *A Critical Appendix*, on his Lordship's Reply. *Ibid.* 1861.

(6.) *An Essay* on Baron de Bunsen, in "Essays and Reviews." London: Longmans. 1860-3.

(7.) *Persecution for the Word.* A Sermon on leaving Lampeter. Longmans. 1862.

(8) *An Introduction to* Mr. Desprez's Daniel. Williams and Norgate. 1865.

applied the sequel of the Burden on Damascus, ch. xv. (A. V. xvii.) to Christ's Advent, and proceeds to reject their interpretation. He can draw useful distinctions, as when he distributes the term Jerusalem over four heads, (1.) the earthly city, un-loved (he says,) of God; (2.) the general assembly of saints; (3.) the angelic host; (4.) the Millennial city, or New Jerusalem, descending from Heaven; which last he sternly rejects, as an heretical fiction (A. V. xlix.). Again, he can be insane, when he makes the land beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, ch. xvi. (A. V. xviii.) mean the transcendent impiety of heretics, and turns the Ethiopian ambassadors into apostles of Marcion. "*O angeli hæreticorum ite veloces.*" Of his constant and overbearing unfairness to the Jews, it would be only painful to give instances. Let us rather mention in parting with him, that he bestowed infinite pains on what he regarded as a sacred work; he has preserved for us much material for reflexion, though much that the Christian Divine should avoid, instead of filtering it into modern shapes; he has the merit of affirming in the Prophets a self-conscious and reflective intelligence, instead of the *clairvoyance* of the Montanists; he was in his kind a reformer, who essayed the rectification of ideas; and by claiming, to the best of his knowledge, for philology her due, he brought on himself the anathemas of men not more religious, but equally passionate, rude, unfair, far narrower of mind.

Rabbinical interpretations, subsequent in period to St. Jerome, but representing an inheritance of thought which in its earlier stages, must have moulded his manner of treating the text, have been collected in sufficient number by our own Lightfoot, by his German amplificator Schœttgen,[2] and by a writer well-versed in Rabbinism, whose

[2] Schœttgen. Horæ Hebraicæ. Dresdæ et Lipsiæ, 1742.

orthodoxy never lessened his ingenuousness, Mr. Oxlee.[3] The remark, to which the vast body of such interpretations are open, is this: hardly any of them descend from the true antiquity, in which the Bible was read according to its plain, literal, and grammatical sense; most of them are derived from that less happy period, in which the Alexandrian method (commencing, I suppose, under the Ptolemies,) had turned the histories of Israel into vehicles for mystical parable, and the monitions of her preachers or poets into predictions of a future repeatedly postponed. Thus, if Jerome made Edom heresy, he followed a precedent which first made it Rome. In turn, he has been followed by Protestants, who made it the Church of Rome. When such a method is established, it may produce any extravagancies. Thus in Isaiah xiii. 6. (A. V. xiv. 29.) an Assyrian basilisk, or other hostile serpent, is introduced threatening Philistia. The *Targum* on this text is, "*out of the descendants of Jesse proceeds the Messiah, whose exploits shall be among you as a flying serpent.*" Again in xii. 11, (A. V. xiii. 12,) it is part of the burden upon Babylon, that man shall be scarcer in her than gold—upon this the *Sohar* (a late production) remarks: "*King Messiah is intended, who will be extolled and precious above all.*" It is not enough to smile at two such interpretations, unless we open our mind to the conception of them as specimens of a method, which is equally unfounded, when its instances are less absurd. If the palm of irrationality be disputed between the mediæval or Patristic Rabbins and our Divines, they set us the example; we sin against greater light. Both contravene the noble spirit of our Homilies, by leading men from the clear fountains of

[3] Oxlee. Trinity and Incarnation maintained. York and London. 1820. 3rd vol. in 1850.

Lightfoot I do not happen to have at hand.

Scripture to the putrid sink of tradition. The only exception in favour of the Rabbins is where some fragment of purer inheritance, or necessity of inspecting the text, suggested to them an historical, which for the most part was a contemporaneous interpretation. Thus they understood the child born, in Isaiah viii. (A. V. ix.) as Hezekiah, with almost unanimous consent, as Mr. Oxlee truly acknowledges (*On the Trinity*, ii. pp. 313—15.). It should be remembered to the honour of this single-hearted scholar, that even in proving, as he conceived, the Holy Trinity out of Isaiah, he felt bound to translate the words *El-Gibbor* as '*Mighty Hero*,' thereby standing in ingenuous contrast to a painfully characteristic account of the passage and of its translators' motives, recently given by Dr. Pusey in his "Lectures on Daniel." One wields the old English sword, the other the Italian stiletto. The reasons why, with sincere respect for Mr. Oxlee's memory, I am not guided by his Hermeneutics, appear best from a perusal of my version. The appeal is to Scripture; to Scripture let us go.

If it be asked, how could Christ and the Scribes quote the Prophets equally on two sides so different, the answer seems chiefly this: Christ, whom we regard as manifesting Divinity through Humanity, spoke on the human side the language of fresh emotion, pure instinct, spiritual feeling. The Prophets had spoken the same. Whereas the Scribes, by no means opposing the Prophets (as seems commonly conceived), but jealous for their honour, and building their tombs, not the less incorporated their language into a system of dogmatical tradition and routine. It does not follow that their exposition of texts was universally wrong. While they argue from Prophecy that 'Christ must be born in Bethlehem' (St. Matth. ii. 4, 5,) and must be by descent 'the Son of David' (St. Matth.

xxii. 42,) Jesus himself urges from the same Prophets, that God loves kindness more than sacrifice (St. Matth. xii. 7); that the Son of God is David's lord (St. Matth. xxii. 43); that his birth is purely spiritual (St. John i. 12—14); that the signs of his coming are meekness and great humility (St. Matth. xxi. 5); that the way into his kingdom is by suffering, (St. Luke xxiv. 26—45,) by serving, (St. Luke xxii. 27,) by conformity in spirit and in fate to the Prophets which were before (St. Matth. v. 10—12). Often he transfers temporal language to spiritual things: sometimes his followers may have transferred spiritual language to things temporal. But when our Lord says, (St. Matth. xv. 7,) "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias pro-"phesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh to me "with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips,"—he certainly never intended to exclude from Isaiah xxv. 13, (A. V. xxix. 13,) the Prophet's direct reference to his contemporaries; the new adaptation of words is a warning to the hearers lest they incur an ancient condemnation. One of the better among our Colonial Bishops, being overpowered by fulsome compliment, exclaimed, "Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner"—thereby he did not claim to be predicted in St. John ix. 24; but made his case exemplify an ancient saying. So, returning to Isaiah xxv. 11, (A. V. xxix. 11,) if one said, with no sarcasm, but with sorrow, the Prophet's own book is now sealed alike against learned and unlearned, all that would be asserted would be an exemplification, so far a fulfilment, of his words. Nothing could be more truly said: so much does tradition, aided by powerful misrepresentation, obscure it: so many accumulations of commentary must be removed to reach the soil.

Other difficulties may await us in the conflict of ages between faith and sense, the unseen and the seen, the

Church and the world; something certainly as regards inspiration and finiteness or spontaneity; something perhaps in miracles and causation; something in the relation of an ancient Orientalism to our changed world; or again, in that of a scholastic and polemical ecclesiasticism to a book of life, feeling, practice; something possibly in the permanence of personality, traversed by physical organization; but the supererogatory difficulty, which first arises, from setting Scripture against itself by distorting its history and interpretation, without benefit to its authority, is entirely the creation of our rulers, or our own.

I have enjoyed upon Isaiah, in addition to previous aids, the great assistance of the learned, and on most points exhaustive, commentary of Gesenius; the *Handbuch* of Knobel, a judicious kind of writer; Bishop Lowth's version, defaced by undue license of conjectural emendation; and some important illustrations, due to Mr. Francis Newman; many of whose remarks I should have preferred refuting, if they had not been associated with truths, a frank acknowledgment of which is an indispensable preliminary to any ultimate settlement. I have also consulted with the aid of Archdeacon Tattam the Coptic Version; but being of late date, it has rendered no real service in this part of my work: if I should be spared to complete the second part, I have reason to anticipate from it an useful suggestion.

ISAIAH.

The vision of Isaiah, son of Amoz, which he saw upon Judah and Jerusalem: [*in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah.*]

1. Hearken, Heavens, and give ear, Earth,[1] for the ETERNAL hath spoken: I nourished and brought up sons, and they rebelled against me.

2. Ox knoweth his owner, and ass the stall[2] of his lord: Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

[1] Verse 1 may be punctuated with a larger pause at Earth: and the Eternal hath spoken, be taken as the Eternal has said, &c. &c.

[2] *Stall*, or not less accurately, crib or manger. Lat. Præsepe.

Does the Title refer to all Isaiah's work? or to the first chapter only? or to the first large portion, closing with the twelfth chapter? Since there are many titles of portions, probably the first portion had its title: but this would end with the word Jerusalem; the subsequent names of the kings may have been added by an editor to describe the whole book, since nothing short of the whole extends over so many reigns. So I think the best judges; but from the number of opinions as to the arrangement of Isaiah, selection between them must be conjectural.

1—3. At the commencement of his work, or rather of the collection of his prophecies, which he may have himself arranged, Isaiah (whose name means, *the salvation of Jehovah*), calls on Heaven which is God's throne, and on Earth which is His footstool, to hear the cry of sorrow and remonstrance, which comes of reverence for God, and

3. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, sons that are corrupters; they have forsaken the ETERNAL, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel, they are estranged backwards.[3]

4. Whereupon[4] will ye be smitten again, when ye multiply revolt? the whole head is gone sick, and the whole heart faint;

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[3] The reader will notice a more complex rhythm than the simpler duality which we have elsewhere; the parallelism here proceeding by triplicates, or more loosely. *Corrupters*, or degenerate. *Estranged*, or retreated. Latin, *abalienati sunt*. The LXX. omit the clause, possibly finding it hard.

[4] *Whereupon*. Vulg. Super quo percutiam.

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indignation at sin. Of the thoughts which break into such a cry, we hardly know how much is our own. We feel them, but God awakens them; a consciousness of His awful majesty makes our minds give birth to them: so although the expression is the voice of man, the thought is the Word of God. So in reality, but a reality which should not conceal from us the dramatic imagination and anthropomorphic dress of the utterance, it is God who complains that the nations of the earth, the offspring of his creative thought, become rebellious children. Israel, invested by patriotic piety with the proud title of the first-born of God, had become degenerate, and gone back into estrangement. Already the presentiment shews itself in the Prophet's mind, that the Eternal must punish, yet after punishment, restore a remnant, or create a better generation.

4—7. Strokes enough had fallen, to leave little room for striking. Though Jerusalem remained intact, the land was laid waste by invaders, whether we are to understand the allied troops of the Syrian Retzin and Samaritan Pekach at the end of Jotham's reign, and early under Ahaz; or whether some invasion of the Assyrians,

5. From the sole of the foot even to the head *there is* no sound part in it; *there is* wound and bruise and festering sore; they have not been closed, and not bound, and not softened with oil.

6. Your country is desolate, your cities burnt with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and *its* desolation *is* as the overthrow of strangers.[5]

7. And the daughter of Zion is left like a tent in a vineyard, like a lodge in a cucumber ground, like a besieged city; save that the ETERNAL of hosts had left us a remnant, within a little[6] we had been as Sodom, and had been like unto Gomorrah.

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[5] *And its desolation is.* Or, And it is desolate, as in an overthrow by aliens. *Vulg.* Desolabitur, sicut in vastatione hostili. In this verse and the next, the Latin turns the past tenses into futures, desolabitur, derelinquetur; as does the Greek in the next; ἐγκαταλειφθήσεται. Wrongly, beyond doubt.

[6] *Within a little.* These words belong by punctuation to what has gone before; but by the sense to what follows.

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difficult now to define, had extended its effects into the territory of Judah. Though it is most natural to suppose exaggeration in the Chronicles account of 120,000 soldiers slain, and 200,000 captives (2 Chron. xxviii. 6), which is difficult to reconcile with 2 Kings xvi. 5, and with the promise in Isaiah vii. 6—8, there may easily have been disasters sad enough to awaken a conscience-stricken people, and to set the prophet on the track of inquiry as to the meaning of Jehovah's judgments. When sin and suffering go together, the preacher connects them, although the philosopher may add a consideration of other causes. The overthrow of so many towns, leaving Jerusalem isolated like a shepherd's cottage in the mountains, reminds the Prophet of the destruction of the cities of the plain.

8. Hear the word of the ETERNAL, rulers of Sodom: give ear to the law of our God, people of Gomorrah.

9. Wherefore to me is the multitude of your sacrifices, saith the ETERNAL; I am satiated with burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and in the blood of bullocks and lambs and he-goats I have no delight.

10. When ye come to behold my face,[7] who hath required this at your hand? ye shall not continue to tread my courts, to bring oblation of falsehood;

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[7] *To behold my face;* or, to appear before me. Probably here, as certainly in Psalm xlii. 2, the original writer spoke plainly of seeing God's face in worship, and this not in any gross sense, but in frank tenderness of faith; but the Hebrew editors, fearing the reproach of anthropomorphism, altered the verb *see* into the passive *appear*. The alteration is betrayed by the want of a preposition to the word face.

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8. Having mentioned Sodom and Gomorrah in respect of their ruin, Isaiah is reminded of their wickedness, and with the vehemence of exhortation, adapts their name to Jerusalem. Such an adaptation is not to be interpreted rigidly here, any more than the same expressions should be, when applied to the British king Maelgwyn, by a monk assuming the name of Gildas.

9—11. As men are often struck with the hollowness of mere ritual under the gilded roof of some vaunted Cathedral, so the multitude of propitiations seems to the Prophet shocking. It is unjust to suppose that ancient sacrifice had no higher idea than that of feeding the Deity's appetite, or glutting his wrath; the better feeling of consecration, and of self-dedication by way of symbol, or contrition expressed by offering, entered into the rite from at least Abraham's time, probably before. Granting that coarser minds took a sensual view, such as the Apocryphal book Bel and the Dragon maliciously ascribes to the Babylonians, which is but analogous to the depra-

11. Incense, that is an abomination to me ;[8] new moon and sabbath, calling convocation, is an iniquity I cannot endure, and the congregation[9] on your new moons and your festivals my soul hateth ; they have become a burden to me ; I am weary of bearing.

12. And on your spreading forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you : yea, when you multiply prayer, I am not listening ; your hands are full of blood.

13. Wash, *and* make you clean ; put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes ; cease to do evil ; learn to do good ; search out judgment, relieve the oppressed ; judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

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[8] *Incense that is, &c.* ; or, That, namely an offering of falsehood, is an incense of abomination to me,

[9] *Congregation* ; or, Day of restraint. Comp. Joel i. 13, and ii. 16.

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vation among ourselves of the true doctrine of the Atonement—granting also that Priests, to whom victims were then, as tithes are now, a part of their subsistence, may have encouraged carnal views—yet the gifted spirits, the seers of God, must ever have turned things inward. To them, the sacrifices of God, of which those of Priests could only be signs, were ever the upright or contrite heart. But is the Prophet writing for his own day, or for ours ? Incense, and Sabbath, and Convocation, a weary round of forms and processions, are they pleasanter to God now than of old ? Isaiah spoke of his own time ; but the spirit of his words applies to all time in which like occasion arises. What would he say of consecrating bells ?

The eleventh verse may be differently punctuated, and has been made to express combination of religion and wickedness. I rather think, that idea begins with the following verse, but that formalism or pietism is the offence denounced in vv. 9, 10, 11.

12, 13. After striking at forms, the Prophet strikes

14. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the ETERNAL; if your sins be as scarlet, let them be white as snow,[1] if they redden like crimson, let them be as wool.

15. If you be willing, and hearken, you shall feed on the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be food for the sword; for the mouth of the ETERNAL has spoken.

[1] *Let them be white as snow, &c.*, or, *shall they* be white as snow? if they redden like crimson, *shall they* be as wool? By this reasoning God is conceived to point out the absurdity of supposing that men can continue sinning and yet be in His love and favour. By the version given above, He is conceived not to reason, but to command repentance. Either of these ways is open to choice. A third way, which makes the verse express a promise of extraordinary forgiveness, as if God would count scarlet as snow, and crimson as wool, was certainly not the Prophet's meaning, though it has passed largely into the rhetoric of the pulpit.

deeper; the eternal truth, so natural to man's simpler conscience, but so abhorred by religious societies in their fuller development, that life is worship, or that worship is dear to God for good life's sake, is here enforced, as often by Prophet and Poet, while formalists, if they cannot deny the speech, dislike the speaker. Yet it is true, mere morality is not religion; we cannot buy salvation with good works; it is the gift of God. One might define the difference between good feelings and right actions, or between religious emotion and practical duty; but it is as well understood without definition. Now, if any one will imagine a society, in which a display of feeling, or a stereotyped emotion, were habitually substituted for definite acts and duties, he will be able to conceive the weakness into which the strength of religion may be perverted; he will understand by analogy the kind of hypocrisy which Prophet and Moralist agree in hating, as Christ hated it, with a hatred unblamed by God.

14, 15. If we read these two verses together, our doubt whether the first is interrogative reasoning or command,

16. How is the city that was faithful become a harlot! she that was full of judgment, righteousness dwelt in her; but now murderers.

17. Thy silver is become dross; thy wine mixed with water.[2]

18. Thy princes are rebellious, and associates of thieves; every one of them loveth a gift,[3] and seeketh for recom-

[2] Cf. Hosea iv. 3. (A. V. iv. 18.)
[3] Cf. Micah vi. 3, 4. (A. V. vii. 3, 4.)

will leave the result clear: so long as man sins with blood-red-hand, God cannot count him of lamb-like white; if he obeys, good; if he rejects, woe to him. The Prophet speaks especially to the Israelites, and dwells on their case; but from his instance we may draw a wider truth, which was not unknown to him, if he had cared to generalize.

16. *Quomodo facta est meretrix civitas fidelis?* This verse is believed to suggest the imagery of the Apocalyse xvii. xviii. whether Jerusalem or old Imperial Rome be there meant. By Bishop Bull it is applied to the Church of Rome; this can only be justified by analogy; as when we call our Church our Zion.

17. We cannot too strongly imbue our minds with Isaiah's feeling that Jerusalem ought to be a wife, but is in fact abandoned; her children ought to be children of God, are in fact degenerate—we shall then understand all that is said below of new children being born; a new planting, or budding of Jehovah; a repentance and restoration of the remnant, although a majority of the evil generation be swept away. In a like spirit the Baptist spoke to his contemporaries. Matt. iii. 9.

18. When could such license prevail in Judah? Probably in the reign of Ahaz; possibly in the latest years of Uzziah retired from rule.

pense ; the fatherless they judge not, and the plea of the widow cometh not before them.

19. Therefore is the saying of the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts, the Mighty one of Israel, Ah! I will be eased of my adversaries, and be avenged of my enemies,

20. And I will bring my hand upon thee again, and will purge like ashes[4] thy dross, and take away all thy alloy,

21. And I will bring again thy judges, as at the first, and thy counsellors, as at the beginning; afterward shalt thou be called City of righteousness, faithful city.[5]

22. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and they that turn again in her with righteousness.

23. But destruction shall be of the rebellious and of the sinners together, and they that forsake the ETERNAL shall be consumed.

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[4] *Like ashes ;* or, purely, or, as with alkali.

[5] From this verse the Rabbins deduced, that the Messiah was not to come until judges had failed in Israel; (R. Milai and Elieser, in Schœttgen in h. l.) not seeing that Isaiah imputes to the judges of his own time that they had already failed in what God owns as judgment.

19—21. It is worth reflecting on the imagery here, to see how much of human shape, feeling, figure, may be dramatically ascribed to God, who is pure spirit. We ought not, like Abp. King, in his famous sermon (ed. Whately, Bampt. Lect. 1833) to extend this accommodation so far as to embrace the moral attributes of God, justice, kindness, truth, although a traditional mode of treating ill-realised doctrines agrees with scepticism in doing so ; but we may innocently apply it to every attribute of Deity, derived from the analogy of the physical senses, or human limitations.

22. Let the reader notice the phrase, They that turn, or repent in Zion. We shall find it one of the keywords to Isaiah.

24. For they shall be ashamed out of the fir-trees[6] which ye have desired, and you shall be confounded out of the gardens which you have chosen.

25. For you shall be as a fir-tree whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden in which is no water,

26. And the mighty shall become as tow, and his handiwork[7] as a spark, and they shall burn both together, and *there shall be* none to quench *them*.

II.

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw in vision over Judah and Jerusalem.

1. And it shall be in the aftertime of days, the mountain of the house of the ETERNAL shall be established at the head of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills, and to it shall flow all nations;[8] 2. And mighty

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[6] *Fir-trees.* Commonly taken as ilexes, or oak-trees; but probably the *terebinth*, or turpentine-tree; *i.e.* a resinous evergreen, to which the fir-tree is our simplest correspondent. The *plains* of Mamre, Genesis xviii. 1, should be the oaks, or groves, of Mamre.

[7] *Mighty, and his handiwork;* or conversely, *the idol and its Maker;* which I should think more probable, if authority were not against it.

[8] *All nations.* In Micah, races, or populations.

23—26. If Israel can become what God intends nations to be, its children must repent, as the remnant after many calamities will, and as the Prophet will teach his own children to do. So prosperity may return; in the meantime, every national calamity is a Divine judgment.

II. There are vast varieties of opinion, as to the second chapter and its title. But since Isaiah is not likely to have described his work by a second title, after giving one in the preceding chapter, the title here is probably by a later editor. Again, since this sublime fragment, the *Vision*

races shall go and say, Come, and let us go up to the mount of the ETERNAL, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us of his ways, and that we may walk in his paths; 3. For out of Zion goeth forth law, and the word of the ETERNAL out of Jerusalem:

4. And He shall judge between the nations; and rebuke mighty races; until they beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks;

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of the latter Days, is found in Micah, where it suits the context better than here, for here the first and third chapters read more naturally without it, the probability is, that some early editor, finding the fragment in the Temple, or other archives of the Prophets, and not knowing its author, but thinking it splendid enough for the greatest of the Prophets, inserted it here by conjecture.

Yet the insertion, if such took place, must have been at far too early a date for us to have a right to tamper with it.

Those who wish to vindicate for Isaiah the insertion, though not the authorship of the piece, may do so thus. The Prophet has been deploring the degeneracy of his people, and their fall from the state of children of God. He adopts a well-known fragment (which Micah had adopted also), to describe what Israel might have been; nay, what her remnant turning to God still may become. He invites his people, v. 5, to become worthy of such a prospect; but again, finding little response, he proceeds (ch. iii. 1,) to explain why Jehovah's gracious designs are thwarted.

1—4. Why is this not a prediction of Christianity? First, because its local colouring lays a stress on Mount Zion and its Temple, which Christ with diviner wisdom repudiates. Secondly, because its anticipations of universal peace are far from being fulfilled in Christianity, which

nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more . . . . . .

5. O house of Jacob, come, and let us walk in the light of the ETERNAL . . . . . .

III.

1. Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they take their fill out of the East, and are cloud-gazers[1] as the Philistines, and have minions in the strangers' children;

2. And his land is full of silver and gold, and there is no end to his treasures; and his land is full of horses, and there is no end to his chariots;

3. And his land is full of idols: to the work of their hands they bow down; to that which their fingers wrought;

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[1] *Therefore;* or, surely. *Take their fill;* or, are infected—some term expressing vice being perhaps lost. *Cloud-gazers,* or diviners.

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has tended to war. So the anticipation is at once too local and too glowing. It belongs rather to that class of presentiments by means of which Hope and Imagination pass through poetry into Prophecy. As such, it may be fulfilled hereafter, if God so will. Its beauty speaks for itself.

1. The Prophet either continues the complaints of the first chapter, or explains why the vision of the second is not fulfilled. Those whom God had brought up as his children, are become as children of the stranger. This reproach, in Isaiah's mouth, is purely moral; but might easily glide into the jealousy of a narrow patriotism.

2—4. The prosperous reigns of Uzziah and Jotham had engendered the wealth and pride, with reliance on worldly

4. Yea the man of earth boweth,[2] and the man of might humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not.

5. Enter into the rock, and hide thyself in the dust, before the terror of the ETERNAL, and for the glory of his majesty.

6. That the lofty looks[3] of man be humbled, and the haughtiness of men bow down, and the ETERNAL alone be exalted in that day.

7. For the day of the ETERNAL of hosts is upon all that is proud and lofty, and upon all that is exalted, that it may be humbled:

8. And upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are lofty and exalted, and upon all the oaks of Basan,

9. And upon all the mountains that are lofty, and upon all the hills that are exalted,

10. And upon every high tower, and upon every fortified wall,

11. And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all beautiful sails,[4]

12. And the loftiness of man shall bow, and the haughtiness of men be humbled,

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[2] Good authorities, after the Chaldee, make this verse pray that the man of earth may bow, and the man of might fall in ruin; but I think, with the A. V. this verse describes the idol-worship, and later verses the fall of ruin which will result.

[3] *Lofty looks.* Heb. eyes of loftiness.

[4] *Beautiful sails;* or, desirable pictures.

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resources, which the Prophet, intent on an unseen Helper, specially disliked.

5—16. A presentiment of disaster, or it may well be (as between Tiglath-pileser's sweep of Galilee in 745, and his destruction of Damascus in 738, with the wars of

12. And the ETERNAL alone shall be exalted in that day, and the idols he shall utterly abolish.[5]

13. And they shall enter the caverns of the rocks, and clefts of the dust, before the terror of the ETERNAL, and for dread of His majesty, on his rising to shatter the earth.

14. In that day shall Man cast the idols of his silver and the idols of his gold, which they made for him to worship, to the moles[6] and the bats,

15. To enter the rents of the rocks, and the clefts of the crags, before the terror of the ETERNAL, and for dread of His majesty, on his rising to shatter the earth.

16. Cease ye from man, whose breath in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted?

17. For behold, the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts, removeth from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the

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[5] *Abolish;* or, intransitively, it shall be over with them.

[6] *To the moles, &c.;* or, into the holes of the moles, or rats. The old Versions take it, as if the idols had been made in honour of the moles—for their worship.

Retzin and Pekach in the interval), the actual view of war and its calamities, presents itself to Isaiah as the downfall of all the pride and pomp which he has described. Basan, the land of oak-forest and fat pastures, between Gilead and Mount Hermon, stands for any fertile spot. Tarshish, the name of towns in Cilicia and in Spain, is the indefinite epithet for large, or ocean-going, ships. The entering into caves and clefts of crags is described, 1 Sam. xiii. 6, as from fear of the Philistines in the time of Saul. Comp. Josephus, B. J. vi. 9. 4.; St. Luke xxiii. 30, 31; Rev. vi. 16.

17—20. The cutting off of wise counsellors in peace or war, that great calamity of States and Churches, may be supposed to have taken place at the death of Jotham. The preference for young and flattering counsellors, such

staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water,[7]

18. Valiant,[8] and man of war, judge and prophet, and foreseer and elder; captain of fifty and acceptable of presence, and counsellor and wise in handicrafts, and skilful in eloquence;

19. And I give lads for their princes, and let babes[9] be their rulers;

20. So that the people oppress, each one another, and each his neighbour: the lad behaves proudly against the elder, and the base against the honourable.

21. When a man takes hold of his brother in his father's house, *saying*, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand,

22. In that day shall he lift up[1] *his hand, swearing*, saying, I will not be a binder;[2] for in my house is no bread, and no clothing; ye shall not make me a ruler of people,

23. For Jerusalem has stumbled, and Judah fallen:

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[7] *The whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water.* These words have been thought a conjectural gloss, as interrupting the connexion of thought—the Prophet's conception of the stay and staff, being the valiant and wise.

[8] *Valiant*, or Mighty. Heb. Gib-bor.

[9] *Babes.* Heb. childishnesses.

[1] *Lift up.* So in Exodus xx. 7; Psalm xxiv. 4; to lift up the name or life of Jehovah is to swear. Comp. Paley, Mor. Phil.

[2] *A binder, i.e.* a healer. Comp. Isai. i. 5. LXX. ἀρχηγός.

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as an old author calls "Rehoboam's ear-wigs," belongs to the reign of Ahaz. A feeble government within, invasion from without, make room for anarchy.

21—23. The country is too prostrated for any one to be willing to purchase power, if it involves the burden of

because their tongue and their doings were against the ETERNAL, to provoke his glorious presence.[3]

24. The confession of their faces witnesses against them, and they proclaim their sin, as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their life, for they have requited[4] themselves evil.

25. Say of the righteous that it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings;

26. Woe to the wicked, that it shall be ill with him, for the requital of his hands shall be dealt to him.

27. My people, its oppressors are children, and women its rulers; My people, thy directors[5] lead thee astray, and destroy the way of thy paths.

28. Risen to plead is the ETERNAL, and standeth to judge populations; the ETERNAL enters into judgment[6] with the ancients of his people, and with their princes;

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[3] *To provoke his glorious presence.* Heb. to embitter the eyes of his glory.

[4] *Requited,* or dealt. LXX. has, *βεβούλευνται βουλὴν πονηρὰν, . . . εἰπόντες, Δήσωμεν τὸν δίκαιον ὅτι δύσχρηστος ἡμῖν,* surely a strange rendering.

[5] *Directors;* or flatterers, Qui beatum dicunt. LXX. *οἱ μακαρίζοντες.*

[6] *Entereth into judgment;* or, comes in judgment.

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protecting. As if the Roman patricians had cast off their clients, or feudal lords refused to protect their serfs.

24. Wickedness brings forth its last offspring, shamelessness.

25—27. Pleas for right are wasted upon a shameless and youthful Court, and on the great men whom it licenses.

28—30. Though wrongs such as Jezebel wrought to Naboth are not written of Jerusalem in the reign of Ahaz, acts of a like kind seem implied, as calling in the Prophet's vexed heart for Jehovah's judgment. Wrong is never

29. So you have consumed the vineyard; the plunder of the afflicted is in your houses!

30. What mean you, that you crush my people, and grind the faces of the poor? is the saying of the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts.

IV.

1. Moreover, the ETERNAL saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with *their* neck stretched out, and glancing with eyes, stepping and mincing as they go, and tinkling with their feet,

2. Therefore the Lord smiteth bald the skull of the daughters of Zion, and the ETERNAL maketh their shame naked.

3. In that day the Lord taketh away the display of tinkling rings, and head-nets,[7] and crescents, the pearl-drops, and the bracelets, and the thin veils,

[7] *Head-nets;* or, embroidery. *Crescents;* or, necklaces.

more injurious than in the form of law. Comp. Psalms lviii. 1, xxvi. 10.

1—7. Jerome, [docebimur, non de mulieribus esse sermonem Pr. sed de urbibus Judeæ, quas filias Sion appellavit. *H. in l.*] and many expositors, take all this passage figuratively, of the towns of Judæa, captured by the Assyrian. But, however Hebrew-like such an image might be, the context shews that Isaiah is contrasting the feminine show and pomp which the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham had encouraged, with the later disasters from Syrian and Assyrian invaders. The whole description is life-like, as if the Prophet, like Clement of Alexandria, had felt too keenly the tinkling step and glance. It is an Arab compliment to say a lady walks evenly without step-rings.

4. The turbans, and the step-rings, and the girdles, and the scent-boxes, and the serpent-charms, the rings of the finger and rings of the nostril;

5. The bright cloaks and the tunics, the mantles and the purses,

6. The thin muslin,[8] and fine linen, the hoods and the veils.

7. And it shall be, instead of perfume shall be stench, and instead of a girdle raggedness, and instead of artifice of curling baldness, and instead of bright shawl girding of sackcloth;

8. For instead of splendour[9] thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy valour in battle,

9. Then shall her gates lament and mourn, and she shall sit upon the ground, desolate;[1]

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[8] *Muslin*, or any transparent robe. *Fine linen*, or night-dress. Without neglecting to consult the authorities, I do not vouch for these terms, on which Bp. Lowth, Gesenius, Rosenmüller, may be compared.

[9] *For instead of splendour, &c.* Or, scorching instead of beauty, as it is commonly taken. In that case כִּי is a noun. I cannot doubt it to be a particle, and that the stop after יְפִי beauty, should be removed. Frequently punctuation is the chief, or only, cause of difficulty.

[1] *Desolate;* or, cleaned out.

Still less can we follow Jerome, when leaving the letter, *i.e.* the natural sense, he makes seven women mean the seven graces of the Holy Spirit, which finding no other fit abode laid hold on "Jesus, for whom they had been a long time yearning." This is pretty, and I do not wish the reader to smile at it, but think it right occasionally to point out that nothing of the kind was Isaiah's meaning.

7—10. The pictures often drawn of the gilded Court of the Bourbon kings, with their feminine etiquette and intrigue, and of the stern Nemesis which followed in the

10. And seven women in that day shall lay hold upon one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let thy name be called over us, to take away our reproach.[1]

11. In that day shall JEHOVAH'S budding be a brightness and a glory, and the land's fruit be a pride and a beauty for them that are escaped of Israel.

12. And it shall be, he that is remnant in Zion and survivor in Jerusalem, shall be designate holy, *even* every one written among the living in Jerusalem;

13. If the Lord washes the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purges the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment, and the spirit of fervor;

14. Then will the ETERNAL create over all the base of mount Zion, and over her congregation a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night:

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[1] *To take away*; or rather, Take thou away. 8. Let the reader notice, that *Geveerah*, the Hebrew word for valour, is the same root as we shall find in El Gibbor, ch. 8, v. 22.

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hour of Revolution, may serve as truer illustration of this chapter.

9. This verse has been illustrated by the coin struck by Titus, representing *Hierosolyma Capta;* but even if the Prophet means Jerusalem, and not, as seems more probable, each widowed matron, the remoter prediction can only be traced by analogy, as in a recurrence of event.

11, 12. Isaiah looks forward to the birth of a better generation, the budding or planting of Jehovah, when the mothers who owed the state children should have been purged by judgment.

14. The imagery of this verse is taken from the symbols of the Divine presence which accompanied the ark in the

15. For over all *his* glory shall be a covering and a shelter;[2] for a shadow in the daytime from the heat; and for a refuge and hiding-place from tempest and from rain.

V.

1. Let me sing now for my beloved my beloved's song upon his vineyard; my beloved had a vineyard on a hill where the olive bare fruit,[3]

2. And he fenced it, and stoned it, and planted it with a choice vine, and built a tower in its midst; and also established a wine-press therein; and he looked for its bearing grapes, but it bore wild berries.[4]

3. And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard.

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[2] *A covering and a shelter.* (A. V. iv. 5.) Our Hebrew Bibles punctuate the word *covering* into the preceding verse, and leave it unsupported by a verb; a striking instance, as it seems to me, of erroneous punctuation.

[3] *Where the olive bare fruit.* Heb. In a horn the son of oil. Lat. In cornu filio olei. Gr. *ἐν κέρατι, ἐν τόπῳ πίονι.*

[4] *Wild berries.* Lat. Labruscas. Gr. *ἀκάνθας.*

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wilderness. The visible signs appear to have been very early confounded with the spiritual thing signified. The case resembles nearly that of Transubstantiation, except that in the one Scripture presents as identity, what we must infer to have been confusion. Compare Exodus xiii. 21, 22, with John i. 18, iv. 24, vi. 32, 1 Tim. vi. 16.

The chapter ends, with a continuation of the conditional promises of the first chapter, but here with special reference to those who should be mothers in Israel.

1—7. The Old Testament, rich in metaphor and comparison, rarely expands its abrupt figures into the form of narrative called parable. Gideon's youngest son, Jotham, (Judges ix. 8,) lifted up his voice in such a strain. Joash

4. What was there to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked for its bearing grapes, bore it wild berries?

5. And now, let me teach you what I am doing to my vineyard; removing its fence, that it may be for devouring; breaking its wall, that it may be for trampling.

6. Until I make it a wilderness, *which* shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up briars and thorns; and I will command the clouds off from raining upon it rain.

7. For the vineyard of the ETERNAL of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah the plantation wherein he had delight; and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

8. Woe to those that join house to house, that make field approach field, till there is no space, and *till* you dwell alone in the heart of the land.

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defies Amaziah in a parable. The Wisdom of the book of Proverbs, as contrasted with the evil woman, is an approach to the same style. In Zephaniah i. 6, 7, we find the germ of Christ's parable of the wedding garment. This fifth chapter of Isaiah prepares us for the parables of the barren fig-tree, and of the vineyard, of which fruit was sought in vain. The opening line is needlessly taken by some as a fresh title; so the chapter would be a fresh prophecy. It is more natural to consider the opening as the Prophet's own transition to a striking illustration of the warnings which he has already uttered, and which he resumes, or continues, in this chapter.

The fifth verse shews in its whole construction, that Isaiah is speaking of the present.

8—12. Complaint of wrong-doing is accompanied, as before, by denunciation of judgment. See Introduction.

9. In my ears [5] *spake* the ETERNAL of hosts, Of a truth great houses shall become a desolation; mighty and goodly *houses* without an inhabitant.

10. Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one kilderkin,[6] and the seed of an omer shall yield its tenth part.[7]

11. Woe to those that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink; that tarry in the twilight, until wine inflame them.

12. And the harp and the lute, the timbrel and pipe, and wine, are in their banquets; but they regard not the work of the ETERNAL, and do not see the operation of his hands.

13. Therefore is my people exiled, from not having knowledge;[8] and its honourable men[9] are famishing, and its multitude is parched with thirst.

14. Therefore has the grave[1] enlarged its desire, and opened its mouth without limit, that her glory and her

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[5] *In my ears.* So the Hebrew text, to which the verb *spake* has to be supplied. But the LXX. take it as *in the ears of* Jehovah, which probably the Prophet wrote, some phrase expressive of the cry going up into his ears, being lost, which we cannot now replace.

[6] *One kilderkin.* Heb. One *bath.*

[7] *Its tenth part.* Heb. One *ephah.*

[8] *Exiled, from not having knowledge.* Or possibly, so exiled, as to lose knowledge—but Qu.?

[9] *Honourable men, &c.* Heb. Its honour is men famishing.

[1] *Grave;* or, underworld. Heb. the *Hollow* place, Shĕōl, κοῖλος, or an undefined term for the obscure region of the dead. Never in the Bible for a place of torment. Hence to an ordinary ear the rendering "Hell" would be misleading.

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13. The exile of the Ten tribes may enter into the Prophet's thought, though shared by his nearer countrymen under Retzin and Pekach.

15, 16. A comparison of these verses with chapter iii. tends to show the continuous train of the Prophet's

multitude and her pomp and he that exulteth may descend into it;[1]

15. That the man of earth may bow, and the man of might be humbled, and the eyes of the haughty be humbled;

16. But the ETERNAL of hosts be exalted in judgment, and God who is Holy be sanctified in righteousness;

17. And that the lambs feed in their driftways, and wanderers eat the waste places of fatlings.

18. Woe to those that drag their iniquity with bands of falsehood, and transgression as with twisted cart-rope;

19. That say, Let him speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw near, and come, that we may know it!

20. Woe to those that say Good to evil, and Evil to good; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

21. Woe to the wise in their own eyes, and in their own sight intelligent!

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[1] *Into it.* These words might be joined with exulteth, and be construed *in her*, meaning Zion.

[2] *Vulg.* Deserta in ubertatem versa advenæ comedent, Cf. Psalm cvii. 33—37. The LXX. had a different text, *βοσκηθήσονται οἱ διηρπασμένοι ὡς ταῦροι, καὶ τὰς ἐρήμους τῶν ἀπειλημμένων ἄρνες φάγονται.* The Chaldee paraphrases it, that the righteous shall enjoy the possessions of the wicked. The Prophet's meaning was simpler.

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thought, and the connexion of four out of the five chapters with which the book commences.

17. God's appearance to judge the oppressor restores to the weaklings their own, and to the lambs of God's flock the pastures, which fat bulls of Basan had trampled.

19—23. The court of Ahaz, a young prince, with a general license of the times, may have suggested these

22. Woe to the mighty to drink wine, and men of skill to mingle strong drink!

23. Justifying the wicked for the sake of reward, and who take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

24. Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours stubble, and *as* flame consumes dry grass,[3] their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom go up as dust; because they have rejected the law of the ETERNAL of hosts, and despised the utterance of the Holy One of Israel.

25. Therefore is kindled the anger of the ETERNAL against his people, and he stretches forth his hand against them and smites them; so that the mountains tremble; and their carcase is as offscouring[4] in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

26. And he lifts up an ensign to the nations from afar,[5]

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[3] *Dry grass;* or, chaff.

[4] *As outscouring;* or, torn, if the Hebrew be a single word. Vulg. *Quasi stercus,* and so all the ancients.

[5] The change of number sounds harsh, but may be significant.

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complaints. The scoff, "Let him speed and hasten," is a prelude to the ominous name, "*Haste-spoil—Speed-plunder.*"

24. It can hardly be needful to warn the reader against commentators who introduce here the fiery tongues of Pentecost. Isaiah is using the natural language of indignant zeal rising into poetry.

25. The stretched out hand of Jehovah here prepares us for the recurrence of the same image in lyrical sweep in the ninth chapter.

26, 27. This grand conception represents remote nations, and specially the Assyrian, under Tiglath-pileser, Shal-

and hisses unto him from the end of the earth, and behold he cometh rapidly *and* lightly;

27. None is weary in his *host,* and none stumbleth; neither slumbereth *one,* nor sleepeth; neither is the girdle of their loins loosed, nor the band of their shoes broken;

28. Whose arrows are sharp, and all his bows bent, the hoofs of his horses are counted as flint, and his wheels as a whirlwind;

29. His roaring is as a lion, and he roars like the young lions; when he rages and lays hold of prey, he carries it away safe, and there is no deliverer.

30. And he shall rage against him in that day, as the raging of the sea; and *if one* looks to the earth, then behold darkness of distress; and the light is darkened in her heavens.[6]

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[6] The second clause of this verse is most doubtful. Strict punctuators take it, Behold darkness; distress and light; it is darkened in her (heavens,) clouds, or ruins. The Scribes, I believe, were here, as often, misled by excessive love

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maneser, Sennacherib, marching as their pride thinks for conquest, but as the Prophet divines the secret counsel of God, for judgment.

28. The archers of Mede and Persian would swell the host of Nineveh. The cavalry of the plains, known in later times as Parthian, if not shod (as the horses of the Romans and later Arabs were) with iron, yet with firm hoof ("bronze-footed" as Homer calls it, selected, as Xenophon recommends, for its hardness) would tread unhurt desert or loose road.

29. The lion raging, and rending, (without thinking of the Nineveh sculptures,) is a standing image with the Prophets for any calamity, yet here appropriate.

30. The indefinite tenses leave the reader to distinguish

VI.

1. In the year of king Uzziah's dying, then I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lofty, and his robes filling the temple; 2. Seraphs were standing from above for him; each *having* six wings; for him to cover his face with two, and cover his feet with two, and fly with two. 3. And one called to the other and said, HOLY, HOLY,

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of point and antithesis; things not foreign to Isaiah, but which they constantly exaggerate. Without guaranteeing the sense of the word עריפיה which may mean *clouds*, or *ruins*, I think the rhythm as against the punctuation, with the Latin and Anglican Versions aided by De Wette, may justify what I have hesitatingly given. Gesenius follows the punctuation of the Masora. I look in vain for help from Ewald, who on his own inspiration has transferred this passage I know not whither. Knobel, whom I am now beginning to consult, agrees essentially, but treats the heavens as the clouds causing darkness, which may be true, though the parallelism suggests otherwise. *Vulg.* Lux obtenebrata est in caligine ejus.

[7] *Robes*, or less probably, tapestry.

[8] *From above for him;* or, above him.

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foe from victim. The awe of alternate gloom and glare, in the last clause, whether in earth and heaven, as in sea, or amidst the crash of ruin extinguishing hope (comp. Hosea xii.) is best illustrated by comparing below viii. 15, 16. Against him, or them, means against Israel.

1—4. Having hitherto arranged in mass the thoughts which had governed his career, or his life-long message to Judah, Isaiah now reflects upon his authority; or more truly upon that Divine impulse which first urged him on his path as a preacher and reformer. Even on the less probable supposition that the earlier chapters report baldly so many speeches uttered by him, the questions of his opponents would force him into self-justification, which could in no way be so natural (especially amongst a Church and nation not yet ashamed of God,) as in taking the form of a report of his first consecration to his work. I say work, rather than office. Generally with men who

Holy, is the Eternal of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory. 4. And the posts of the doors quivered at the voice of him that cried, and the temple[9] became full of incense.

[9] *Temple*, or less probably, Palace.

have received a sacred call, the manner is first to go about the work, and not till afterwards, in self-review, doubt, or opposition, to describe the circumstances of the call.

All the scenery and forms of this vision are so natural, that we may consider it either as a dream, or mental trance, or poetical embodiment of imagery suitable to the high thoughts of the great Preacher's mind. In any case, we are not bound to suppose it a literal description of Heaven.

But, if the ineffable presence of the Infinite Spirit were to be bodied forth in human speech or form, where should the King eternal, invisible, the only wise God, be better imagined, than filling the Temple with His glory? And yet in grander, because simpler Truth, the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Him; how much less the house that Hebrew or Lombard rears? But since imagery is here to be employed, Isaiah supposes God filling the Temple with pomp of throned majesty. Seraphs, the burning spirits, whom on the physico-elemental side we may compare to lightnings, (as Cherubim to Winds,) but who in mystical contemplation become the fervent spirits of love, as Cherubim are spirits of intellect, attend upon the King. Songs, such as Isaiah had heard in choral worship, loving them perhaps as a dweller of Jerusalem, better than Amos, the sternly devout Shepherd, loved those at Bethel, (comp. Amos vi. 6, A. V. viii. 3,) proclaim thrice holy the Lord. Incense, that pleasant, even if dangerous, accompaniment of worship, soothes the sense, and symbolizes prayer. The many wings of the Seraphs may suggest

5. And I said, Woe to me, for I am undone; because a man of unclean lips am I, and in the midst of a people of unclean lips am I a dweller; for mine eyes have seen the King, the ETERNAL of hosts.

6. And one of the seraphs flew towards me, and in his hand a burning coal,[1] which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, 7. And he made it touch upon my mouth, and said, Behold, this hath touched upon thy lips, so that thy iniquity is removed, and thy sin is atoned.[2] 8. Then heard I the voice of the ETERNAL, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Behold me; send me.

[1] *A burning coal.* Vulg. Calculus, quem forcipe tulerat ex altari.

[2] The technical Hebrew word for Atonement and Propitiation, *Câphar*, is here used, but raised out of its technical sense into spiritual power.

to us, like Ezekiel's figures moving all ways, how many more capacities and modes of apprehension higher spirits may have, than we, who look barely two ways. So some day we may understand strange propositions; but yet we are sure they will never be against the goodness of God.

5—8. The first effect of a clear vision of God is always to depress with a sense of unworthiness. Hence the old Puritan conviction of sin. Hence Moses in the mount is unwilling to go, though God sends him. Hence the Breath of God, pleading for Heaven with man's heart, instead of Jesus removed from earth, convinces the world of sin. Hence also some aspects, I do not say all, of our concrete doctrine of the Fall of Man. So St. Paul cries out, "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death." So Isaiah sickens and trembles. But the second effect of the Divine Vision is to encourage with tenderness and faithfulness. Will God plead with us with His great power? No; but He will put strength into us. So Isaiah's sin is atoned by the ineffable depth

9. And he said, Go, and say to this people, Hearken and hear, but understand not; and behold and see, but perceive not.

10. Fatten the heart of this people, and bedull their ears, and seal their eyes;[3] lest he see with his eyes, and hear with his ears, and understand with his heart, and be healed.[4]

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[3] *Seal their eyes;* or, smear over, as with wax, or with a plaster.

[4] *And be healed.* Heb. And one heal him. Whether the quotation of this verse, St. John xii. 39—41, implies that Christ's glory was seen by the Prophet, depends, first, on whether St. John meant Christ and not the Father, in ver. 41; secondly, on whether such citation in the New Testament gives necessarily the meaning of the Old. Probability seems against it.

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of Divine love. He is inspired with fire from an altar of the mind.

Not before his sin was cleansed, was He able to hear the Divine Voice. The turbid accents of passion and earth, if not all godless, are but a feverish mimicry of the higher truth. The natural impulse of the creature, cleansed from sin, is to obey its Creator; or if a Divine presence must quicken the impulse, that presence is not wanting, except when the sense of sin shuts it out. When our hearts know Him as He is, we make answer, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

9, 10. After the vision comes the message; but let not such a word blind us to the freedom with which God lets men act through perceptions of truth and duty, hardly removing their spontaneity, still less their free agency, nor breaking down the limits which time, place, and circumstance, set to their knowledge. So what dramatically, or in poetry, is called a message, is in sober reality rather an impulse. The exaggerations of technical Divines on this point, both imply and tend to cherish as profound an ignorance of God's dealings with man's heart as made Isaiah's people dull, deaf, and blind.

11. And I said, How long, Lord? And he answered, Until cities crash, so that they have no inhabitant, and houses that they have no man therein, and the land be wasted desolate;

12. Until the ETERNAL carry the men afar off, and the deserted ones [5] in the midst of the land be many,

13. Though yet be in it [6] a tenth, which shall turn and be zealous; [7] even as the fir-tree [8] and the oak, which in their lopping have a stock *left* in them; and her stock shall be a holy seed.

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[5] *The deserted ones many;* or, the deserted space much.

[6] *Though yet be in it;* or, And shall be yet in it.

[7] *Turn and be zealous;* or, return. Or, shall be again for burning, as if the tenth spared should be again destroyed; but a comparison of the spirit of burning zeal, or fervour, in iv. 13, with the phrase "they that turn again in Zion," in i. 22, and the words "turn and be healed," in vi. 10, shows the rendering above, though not adopted by most critics, to be probably the true one.

[8] *Fir-tree.* Hebr. terebinth, or ilex.

Fatten the heart of this people, i.e. Paint them, as they are, fat and coarse: but yet with a reference to the awful truth that God, suffering men to brutalise themselves, may as the Causer of all causes be said to infatuate them into fitness for destruction. Comp. St. John xii. 39, 40.

11—13. When the Prophet asks the Spirit, how long the judgment which he is led to forebode will continue, he finds no end of it probable, until repentance, renewal, a returning generation, shall have been born out of sorrow and exile. Then only the natural destiny of the righteous nation may begin to be fulfilled. A comparison of these last verses with both the first chapter and with the 7th, 8th, 9th, will show how continuously the Prophet's thought proceeds; so that critics seem to do wrongly who break it into many prophecies.

VII.

1. Now it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, Retzin, king of Aram, and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel, went up towards Jerusalem for war against it, but could not prevail against it. 2. And when it was told the house of David, saying, Aram is confederate with Ephraim, then his heart was moved, and his people's heart, like the movement of trees of the forest before the wind.

3. Then spake the ETERNAL to Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and Remnant-return[9] thy son, to the end of the channel of the upper pool, to the causeway of the fuller's field.

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[9] *Remnant-return;* or, Remnant-repent. Heb. Shear-yashuv. See note on last verse of preceding chapter. A better translation might be, Turn again Remnant.

1—4. Having described his first call, Isaiah proceeds to narrate his execution of it. The latter part of this chapter is strongly illustrated by comparing the first and second chapters of Hosea, where a similar, but contrasted, image is less decorously used. Prophet of God, and father of children, Isaiah would gladly see in his own household an example of the better generation which his country, in order to be saved, must produce. So he called his first child, *Remnant-repent,* like the African bishop *Deo-gratias,* Augustine's son *Adeodatus,* the Greek *Theodore,* whence our own *Tudor,* the English *Praise-God-Barebones.*

Having possibly become a widower, as the witnesses of betrothal in verse 22, 23, seem to denote a fresh espousal, but at all events hoping for a second son, in whose young days deliverance should dawn on the land, Isaiah goes

4. And say to him, Be tranquil[1] and calm; fear not, and let not thy heart faint, for the two ends of these smoking firebrands, at the kindling of the anger of Retzin with Aram, and of the son of Remaliah.

5. Because Aram has counselled against thee evil, *with* Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, saying, Let us go up against Judah, and vex[2] her, and make a breach therein for ourselves, and set a ruler to rule in her midst, the son of Tabeal,

6. Thus saith the Lord, the ETERNAL, It shall not stand, and shall not come to pass,

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[1] *Be tranquil;* or, take heed to thyself. One of the distinctions of Rabbinical grammarians, whose ingenuity is too often misleading, connects this word with the settlement of undisturbed wine, like "Moab settling on his lees." Jerem. xlviii. 11.

[2] *Vex;* or, set a ruler over her, according to an ingenious, but ungrammatical conjecture of Abarbanel's. Cf. קצין.

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forth, with strong faith in the Divine protection, to encourage Ahaz and his people against the league of Syria and Israel.

5—8. Though the two kings meditate the subjection of Judah under a vassal of their own, the King of Kings, who fixes the boundaries of nations, and has appointed Samaria for Ephraim, and Damascus for Syria, will not add to their lands Jerusalem the city of peace. We must infer the statement of time, when Samaria should cease to be a nation, not to come from Isaiah's own hand, not only because he would not describe nineteen or twenty years as sixty-five, but also because the balance of rhythm is disturbed by the mention of Ephraim's destruction. So in St. John iv. 22, the intrusive verse, "*Ye worship ye know not what, for salvation is of the Jews,*" betrays its interpolation at a time, when the first spiritual freedom of Christ's faith was waxing feeble, not only because it is at

7. For *as* the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus, Retzin; *so* the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. [*and within the space of sixty and five years Ephraim shall be destroyed from being a people.*][3]

8. If you count not [*God*] firm, surely you shall not be confirmed.

9. And the ETERNAL went on to speak to Ahaz, saying,

10. Ask thee a sign of the ETERNAL thy God, diving deep to the hollow, or soaring to the height above.

But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and will not tempt the ETERNAL.

11. Then he said, Hear now, O house of David; is it too little for you to weary men, that you will weary also my God?

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[3] Since this speech was in the reign of Ahaz, between whose accession B.C. 741, and the fall of Samaria B.C. 721, were only twenty years, the mention of sixty-five years must either be counted back to some ancient prophecy, as of Amos, or be taken as interpolated by an early Editor, perhaps within twenty years of Isaiah's death; the interruption of the Hebrew parallelism by this clause renders the latter supposition the more probable. I therefore follow the most conscientious modern scholars in throwing the clause into a suggestive parenthesis.

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variance with Christ's own sentiment, but because it interrupts the rhythm (parallelism) of the sentence.

8. By trust in God's strength Man is strengthened.

9—14. With an outburst of growing confidence in God, Isaiah bids the king select some event, which, when it happened, should be a sign that the course of the war had turned out favourably, not by chance, but by God's providence. Ahaz, despondent or contemptuous, will have no dealing with one whom he regards as presumptuous.

See then, says Isaiah, this girl, (whether his first wife, and therefore called the prophetess, ver. 23, or a second,

12. Therefore giveth the Lord himself to you a sign; Behold the girl[4] conceiving, and bearing a son, and calling his name WITH US IS GOD [or Immanuel].

13. Butter and honey shall he eat, at his knowing[5] to refuse evil and to choose good; for before the boy shall know to refuse evil[6] and to choose good, the land before whose two kings thou shrinkest shall be desert.

14. The ETERNAL is bringing upon thee and upon thy people and upon thy father's house days which have not come from the day of Ephraim's departing from Judah, [*even* the king of Assyria,][7]

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[4] *The girl.* Heb. *Almah.* Vulg. Virgo. LXX. παρθένος, and so most divines against most philologists. But the far better versions of Symmachus, Aquila, Theodotion, give νεᾶνις; and so the analogy of Proverbs xxx. 19, the etymology of the word, which is feminine of *Elem*, a boy, and above all, the necessities of the context, with Isaiah's own explanation, persuade me. So all native Hebraists, and the most ingenuous Christian scholars, from whom I dare not withhold my suffrage; though instead of arguing a point so full of possibilities of offence, I would refer my reader to Gesenius's larger Lexicon, in which Jerome and his followers are discussed. Knobel, on this passage, may be compared with Rosenmüller, who does what he can for the other side.

[5] *At his knowing.* So the context requires, but this clause might rather more probably be rendered, *up to* the time of *his knowing.*

[6] *To refuse evil.* LXX. ἀπειθεῖ πονηρίᾳ. Surely a very ancient corruption, as old as Cyril's time, I believe; but for which I venture hopefully to suggest to scholars, ἀπωθεῖν πονηρίαν.

[7] The words *King of Assyria*, have redundancy and perhaps inapposite-ness, to render their genuineness doubtful.

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whom he was about to espouse;) before a child can be born of her, and be big enough to choose his food, the lands of Syria and Samaria shall be swept by the Assyrian invader, and the child, instead of finding choice of flesh and wine, shall be driven to eat the food of wandering shepherds, butter from a stray cow or sheep spared, honey from the wild tree or rock.

15. And it shall be in that day, the ETERNAL will hiss for the fly which is at the farthest end of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee which is in the land of Assyria,

16. And they will come, and rest all of them in the valleys of desolation, and in the clefts of the rocks, and upon all the wild-thorns, and in all the *watery* meadows : [8]

17. In that day will the ETERNAL shave with the razor hired[9] on the farther side of the river, with the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet, and it shall also take away the beard.

18. And it shall be in that day, *if* a man feeds[1] a heifer of the flock, and two sheep, then it shall be from abundance of yielding milk he may eat butter ; surely[2] butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land.

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[8] *Watery meadows;* or, fruit trees.

[9] *Hired;* or, drunken. Gr. μεμισθωμένῳ, or μεμεθυσμένῳ.

[1] *If a man feeds;* or, a man shall feed, and so shall eat, &c. the sense hardly varying, but the conception of the sentence being more or less of prediction or of futurition.

[2] *Surely ;* or, for.

15—20. The combination of strong presentiment with vague knowledge, or the confidence in the Prophet's mind that some calamity would befall the invaders, together with uncertainty from whence the liberating disaster would come, is shewn by the union in his vision of the opposites, Egypt and Assyria. As in swarming bees are attracted by noises, so Isaiah conceives Jehovah rousing the wild swarms of remotest Egypt ; again, with change of figure, such as critics in vain grudge to poets, he pictures the Assyrian king as a razor shaving the goodly forests throughout the land, specially the vine and olive, the boast of cultivation.

Only the shepherd's artless art shall retain its use ;

19. But it shall be in that day, every place, wherein are a thousand vines worth a thousand *of* silver, shall be for briars, and shall be for thorns; with arrows and with bow shall *men* come thither; surely[3] briar and thorn shall be all the land.

20. But all the mountains which shall be digged with the spade, the fear of briars and thorns shall not come thither; but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the trampling of sheep.

21. And the ETERNAL said[4] to me, Take to thyself a great tablet, and write thereupon with man's pen, HASTE-SPOIL, SPEED-PLUNDER.

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[3] *Surely*; or, for.
[4] *Jehovah said.* Possibly, had already said.

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milk, butter, honey, may be found in the wilder corners of the country, for the young child to eat—saving only the wild hills, Egyptian or Assyrian razor shaves Palestine in its widest extent bare.

21—24. It only remains that the Prophet's strong presentiment should take steps to give the sign by which his reading of the course of events would be justified. The great tablet may possibly be a volume in which his warning would be sealed: but according to the context, and the choice of metaphors, from which the Hebrew genius did not shrink, it is obviously the Prophetess, or wife, mentioned below. The writing intended is the Prophetic child. (Compare Hosea i. 2—10; 2 Cor. iii. 3; St. John i. 13; 1 Pet. i. 23.) The witnesses either witness the betrothal, or are to attest that the union was not unhallowed by Divine blessing and purpose. Zachariah is to be distinguished from Jehoiada's son slain by king Joash, 2 Chron. xxiv. 22, and from Berechiah's son, the post-Babylonian Prophet, Zech. i. 1, (but may possibly have been the

22. So I took to record[5] to myself faithful witnesses, Urijah the priest, and Zachariah the son of Yeberechiah.

23. Then I drew nigh[6] to the prophetess, and she conceived, and bare a son; and the ETERNAL said to me, Call his name, HASTE-SPOIL, SPEED-PLUNDER;[7]

24. For before the boy shall know to cry, My father and my mother, *men* shall take away the wealth of Damascus, and the spoil of Samaria, before the king of Assyria.

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[5] *So I took to record;* or, And that I should take to record, &c.

[6] *Drew nigh.* Euphemisticè de conjugali accessu.

[7] *Haste-spoil, &c.* Heb. Maher-shalal-chash-baz.

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author of part of the book ascribed to his better known namesake, Zech. ix. x. xi., which may bear comparing with Isaiah vii.—xi.) His name in the Gospels suggests confusion with the son of Baruch, slain before the siege by the Zealots—a circumstance very critical in determining the date of compilation of our Gospels. Joseph. B. J. iv. 5, 4.

Jerome on this passage rightly observes that the child born in verse 23, is the same as the one promised in verse 12, ("*Præcipitur, ut ipsum puerum qui prius vocabatur "Emmanuel, nunc appellet Accelera, spolia detrahe,*" i.e. *Maher-shalal-hash-baz.* For, as Solomon was called Jedidiah, in respect of Jehovah's favour, but Shelomoh in respect of his peaceful reign, or aspirations, so the same child is here called Immanuel in respect of the Divine protection of Judah, but *Haste-spoil, &c.* in regard to the calamities on the northern kingdoms. It is pretty that his mother calls him by the name of blessing, his father by that of warning. If we have not perceived the meaning and connexion of the chapter, we have only to read over the 24th verse, and we shall hardly fail to learn them. But if any one, not contented with the inspiration of Isaiah, wishes to know traditions on the subject, let him read here Jerome and all his followers. They will teach him, that "*eating*

VIII.

1. And the ETERNAL went on to speak to me again, saying, Forasmuch as this people rejects[8] the waters of Shiloah that go gently, and rejoice in Retzin, and the son of Remaliah,

2. Now therefore behold the Lord is bringing up upon them the waters of the river which are strong and mighty, the king of Assyria, and all his glory;

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[8] *Rejects*, or reprobates. Heb. *Maas;* the original of the doctrine of reprobation, which I often remind the reader of, that he may see how ideas grow, and know that God never rejects any poor soul which diligently seeks him: though the influences of organisation, habit, circumstance, opportunity, mysteriously limit our agency.

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butter and honey" means "the Incarnation:" the Assyrian king means Satan; Syria (or Aram, the highland,) is the pride of secular wisdom; Pekach, (because he remotely succeeds Jeroboam) stands for all heretics; the Prophetess means the Holy Ghost, because the Hebrew word for breath is feminine; Mahershalal, &c. means Christ's Advent. The utmost we can say for such interpretations is, there may have been a time when they were neither blasphemous nor deceptive; what they are now, in the noontide of knowledge, it might be deemed unbecoming—more properly, it would be painful, to explain.

1—3. Since the inhabitants of Judea, or some of them, looked favourably on the Syro-Samaritan confederacy, being jealous of the professedly religious rule of the house of David, which is compared to the gentle stream of Siloa's fount, hard by the oracles of God, therefore the protector of the rightful line, for his servant David's sake, will send on them the Assyrian flood, a violent and stormy substitute for the stream which they reject. Shiloach, the pool Siloam of the Gospels, has nothing to do with Shiloh, or Silo, the sanctuary in Ephraim. We

3. And he comes up over all his channels, and goes over all his banks, and passes through Judah, flooding and overflowing, *until* he reaches up to the neck; *until* the expanse of his wings is the fulness of the breadth of the land: for WITH US is GOD.[9]

4. Shout,[1] populations, and be broken; and give ear, all far places of the land: Gird yourselves, and be broken; gird yourselves, and be broken;

5. Consult counsel, and it shall come to nought; devise device, and it shall not stand: for WITH US is GOD.

6. For thus spake the ETERNAL to me with strength of hand, and monished me from walking in the way of this people, saying,

7. You shall not say, A confederacy, to all to whom

[9] My version of this verse, though faithful, is less observant of letter and pause than the Anglican. The Septuagint, Abarbanel, and others, preceded me in separating the last clause, *With us* is *God*, my chief reason for which will be found two verses lower: but they did not see, what seems likely, that the Prophet wrote ארץ כי עם אנו אל with the last clause identical in both verses, and the CAPH got altered in one.

[1] *Shout*, *i.e.* for battle, as if from רוּע. Or *break*, as if from רעע. Or *threaten*, be evil, as many take it, from רעע. The rendering "Associate yourselves," or be leagued, as if from רעה, might suit the context best, but seems hardly borne by the word. Vulg. Congregamini. Gr. γνῶτε, as if from ידע. For the Hebrew of *Give ear*, one might suspect the word which twice follows, *Gird yourselves* had been thrice repeated.

can hardly, with Jerome, say that it means Him who is sent; or that it means the Fountain springing up into eternal life.

In verses 4—5, Isaiah tells the Syro-Samaritan invaders their attempt will be in vain.

In verses 6—8, he proceeds to warn his immediate countrymen in Judah against joining the confederacy.

These two ideas, verses 4—8, make up the warning and the lore, mentioned below, vv. 11—14.

this people sayeth, A confederacy; and what they fear you shall not fear, neither hold in dread.[2]

8. The ETERNAL of hosts, make Him your Holy One: and He be your fear, and He your dread.

9. So shall He be for a sanctuary *to you*; though for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to the two houses of Israel: for a net and a snare to the inhabitant of Jerusalem.

10. And many shall stumble thereupon[3] and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

11. Bind the warning, seal the lore amongst my learners, while I wait upon the ETERNAL who hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and look for him.

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[2] Compare 1 Pet. iii. 14, 15.

[3] *Thereupon*; or, amongst them.

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9. Isaiah by the two houses would seem to mean the two kingdoms of Judah and Ephraim. Jerome mentions that the Nazarenes (*i.e.* early Christians who still clung to the authority of the letter of the Old Testament), understood the two Rabbinical schools of Schammai and Hillel. To these he traces the Scribes and Pharisees; from them gives a succession of teachers, Akibas, Aquila's master, Meir, John the son of Zachai, Eliezer, Delphon, Joseph of Galilee, Joshua, commencing just before the Christian era, ending with the Fall of Jerusalem. These then are the two houses, to whom the early Christians supposed Christ to be the stumbling-block mentioned by Isaiah. The existence of such an interpretation has this advantage, that it enables us to understand St. Paul's reasoning (1 Cor. i. 23; Rom. ix. 33), and to distinguish the saving truth which he taught by Divine inspiration, from the dress of illustration in which the associations of his time, or of his own mind, involved it.

12. Behold I, and the children whom the ETERNAL hath given me, [*are*] for signs and for portents in Israel from the ETERNAL of hosts, who dwelleth in Mount Zion.

13. And when they say to you, Seek to the conjurors[4] and to the diviners, the ghost-whisperers and the mutterers *of charms*, should not a people seek to its God? for the living *will ye seek* to the dead?

14. To the lore and the warning if they speak not according to this word, *the people*[5] that have no light in them,

15. Then shall they pass therebye, hardly bestead, and hungry, and it shall be, when they hunger and fret themselves, they shall curse their king and their god;

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4 *Conjurors*, or ventriloquists. LXX. ἐγγαστριμύθους, but with the pretence of necromancy, as the Witch of Endor, 1 Sam. xxvii. 7. Hebr. *Auv Auvoth*, which it is a temptation to compare with the Negro *Obeah*-men or women. *Mutterers*, or twitterers, like birds. Latin, *pipientes*. Old Engl. piping.

5 *The people that have;* or, it is because they have, &c.

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12. The twelfth verse furnishes a key to the preceding chapter, and to this, up to this point; but not to the passage ten verses lower down. Isaiah's children are *Remnant-repent*, and *Haste-spoil*, the latter being surnamed *With us*-is-*God*. The Prince of peace mentioned below as having been born, is some one sitting, or destined to sit, on the throne of David.

13. The Prophet rebukes, as he would in our time, superstitious or deceptive divinations, dealing with the dead, and conjuring. Prayer, faith, reasonable confidence, practical trust, are better guides to the will of God, than ventriloquist's tricks and ghost-whispering.

14, 15. The first of these verses may mean, either that the utterance of contrary predictions will be a sign of having no true light; or that such predictions cherished by a people in gloom, will prevent their seeking help from

16. And when they look upward, or gaze upon the earth, then behold distress and darkness,[6] dimness of anguish, and darkness [*of*] scattering;

17. Yet the dimness is not on her that is distressed as in the former time he held light[7] the land of Zabulon and the land of Naphtali,

18. But in the latter time he makes glorious the way of the sea, the Jordan's shore, Galilee[8] of the nations:

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[6] *Darkness of scattering;* or, scattering into darkness.

[7] *Held light,* and *makes glorious.* Hebr. Lightened and weightened, or made heavy. The idea of "affliction" is in neither word, and, though implied in some versions, is now rejected. The LXX. here are mysteriously obscure, *τοῦτο πρῶτον πίε· ταχὺ ποίει χώρα Ζαβυλών, κ.τ.λ.*

[8] *Galilee;* or the region, *i. e.* Peræa, or the country about the Sea of Gennesareth.

Jehovah, and make them curse in the end the Syrian king and deities in whom they trusted. Syria was famous for incantations and superstitions, from very early time. Gen. xxxi. 34, xxxv. 4; 1 Kings xx. 23. Not from mere rivalry, but from righteous contempt of mummeries, Jehovah's nobler priesthood waged war against wizards. It is implied that some degeneracy in this matter accompanied the invasion of Judah.

16. With this verse compare above ch. v. 30. The words "look upward" are usually pointed into the preceding verse: but erroneously so.

17, 18. The chapter which we are reading relates to events which began B.C. 741, ended B.C. 738. Three years earlier than the first date, Tiglath-Pileser had for himself, or as the general of king Sargon, swept the coasts of the sea of Galilee, and depopulated the region. This is the former time, when the God of battles held Galilee lightly. The latter time means reviving prosperity, when the Syrians were conquered in 738, or may express hopes for the future. The one idea would pass into the other.

19. The people that walk in darkness have seen a great light; the dwellers in the land of death's shadow,[9] light has shone upon them.

20. Thou hast multiplied Joy,[1] thou hast made great gladness; they are glad before thee as with the gladness in harvest, and as men rejoice, in their dividing the spoil.

21. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken, as in the day of Midian.

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[9] *Death's shadow.* Heb. *Tzal-maveth.* Not of literal death, but figuratively, of deadly gloom.

[1] *Joy.* Or, as the usual text runs, *the nation for him.* This is one of the very few passages in which (preceded, as I have some reason to believe, by Professor Selwyn,) I have deliberately altered the text. Let the reader note, (1.) the written text, *Thou hast not increased the joy*, contradicts the context, *They joy before thee.* (2.) The Hebrew margin, altering the negative לֹא into the pronoun לוֹ, gives either a redundancy in the first clause after the article ה, or else a misplacement against idiom in the second clause, as if we should begin a Greek sentence with an enclitic particle. (3.) The clue out of the labyrinth is found by noticing the verb *rejoice*, יָגִילוּ, in the second clause, to which *Joy* must have answered in the first clause, as *Gladness* answers to the verb *are glad.*

Of the older notes, Maurer's is the best I have seen. My text might run, הִרְבִּיתָה גִילָהּ הִגְדַּלְתָּה שִׂמְחָה, with the paragogic ה, as in 2 Kings xiv. 10, or might retain the הַ as the article with the nouns.

19—24. This passage runs parallel with the 16th chapter of 2 Kings, in which the reader should compare verses 2, 7, 9, 20, with verses 1—7 of the 18th chapter. He will not doubt the general meaning, though particular dates are disputable. Suppose this written soon after 738, when Retzin was slain. Then if Hezekiah was 25 years old when he became king in 726, he would be from 12 to 14 years old when the Prophet wrote; that is an age when his pious disposition would have shewn itself, and Isaiah would hail in him a worthier successor to the throne of David, for which the disasters of the northern realms were opening

22. For every greave[2] of the trampler in conflict, and *every* garment rolled in blood—yea, they shall be for burning, and for food of fire,

23. For a child is born to us, a son is given to us: and the principality[3] shall be upon his shoulder: and *men* shall call his name, Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty Hero,[4] Father of the age,[5] Prince of peace.

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[2] *Greave of the trampler.* These words, hardly known in Hebrew, are conjecturally explained from the cognate languages.

[3] *Principality;* or, government.

[4] *Mighty hero.* So Mr. Oxlee, in his Rabbinical Proofs of the Trinity, vol. ii. pp. 313—15. Heb. *El Gibbōr.* The first of these words, *Ēl*, meaning might rather than Deity, and hence applied not only to the Almighty, but to the mighty of earth, as in Psalm xxix. 1, and Ezekiel xxxi. 11, xxxii. 21. The second, *Gibbōr*, constantly used of valiant, even of wicked men, as of Doeg, Psalm lii. 1. Its cognate noun *might*, or mightiness, below, chap. xi. 13, happily illustrates it here. The LXX. seem to have thought inopportunely of Gabriel, and used the phrase, *Angel of great counsel;* but have in MS. Alex. a happier reading: ἰσχυρὸς, ἐξουσιαστὴς, ἄρχων εἰρήνης, πατὴρ τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος.—Luther, Kraft, Held.

[5] *Father of the age;* or, Father of spoil. Hezekiah being conceived as the Prince, in whose reign the spoils of invading hosts, as of Sennacherib, should be taken, as well as the re-united kingdoms flourish under David's dynasty. The Vulgate has "Pater futuri sæculi."

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the prospect of wider dominion. Again, if on observing that Ahaz was only 36 when he died in 726, we think it unlikely he should have been a father when only eleven years old, and imagine that a correct Hebrew text would make Hezekiah 15 instead of 25, in 726, then Hezekiah would be now about two years old; the Prophet could hardly fail to connect the auspicious birth of a Royal infant with the birth of his own children, whom he had accepted as signs of a better generation which should grow up in the land. Why should not the Royal child partake of the promises of the coming era? The first of these methods accepts most closely the text as it stands. Either of them points to Hezekiah, and is so far in accord with the greatest

24. To the increase of his principality and peace is no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to set it fast, and to establish it in judgment and in righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the ETERNAL of hosts will perform this.

IX.

1. The Lord hath sent a word[6] upon Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.

[6] *A word*; or, a destruction.

Hebrew expositors Jarchi and Aben Ezra, to whom Grotius and Gesenius add an uncorrupt suffrage. Something of ideal exaltation tinges the passage poetically, as in Jacob's blessing on his sons, Virgil's Eclogue on the child of Augustan hope, Shakespeare's anticipation for the infant Elizabeth; or returning to a more sacred (yet hardly more blest) instance, as in the prayer for some infant prince in the 72nd Psalm. We should delude ourselves, if because Isaiah paints in glowing terms the good time coming under an heir of David's throne, while he had a definite prince in his eye, we were to intrude upon him the notion of a formal Messiah, which arose gradually out of applications of the words of ancient presentiment to each new object of homage, or creation of desire, of generations yet unborn. Messianic, if it must, let the passage be; it only is so in a sense widely removed from the common. If any devout metaphysician can justify the grandest of later applications, by making the Eternal mind of God foresee a remote object, to which the sketch drawn by man for the range of his vision should become ultimately applicable, I have no desire to contravene such a view, provided it can be made probable by reasoning, and proceed upon fair statement as its preliminary.

1—21. If chapters are retained, this portion ought,

2. That the people may know, all of them, Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, in haughtiness and greatness of heart, saying,

3. The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones; the sycomores are cut down, but we will have cedars in exchange;

4. Therefore the ETERNAL exalts against them[7] the oppressors of Retzin, and arrays their enemies in mail,

5. Aram in front, and the Philistines behind; so that they devour Israel with every mouth.

6. For all this his anger is not turned away; but his hand is stretched out still.

7. And the people turns not to their smiter, and seek not the ETERNAL of hosts.

[7] *Against them*; or him, *i.e.* the people. *Oppressors*, or adversaries. There is also MS. authority for reading Princes; שרי for צרי.

from its distinctness of style and subject, to make a chapter. The reader will notice the allusion to a past affliction, and description of subsequent anarchy: the reviving hopes of the Ephraimites, the renewed threats of Isaiah, and the plaintive recurrence of the burthen, as in the litanies of the British bards.

The affliction is probably the carrying away from Samaria, and depopulation of Galilee by Tiglath-Pileser, in 745; that such a blow would be followed by disorder in the land, we, who have seen Italy, can understand; that Isaiah should be jealous of the Northern kingdom, whose first use of its revival from prostration was, in conjunction with the Syrians, to attack Judea, is perfectly natural.

But why are Retzin's adversaries, warriors, or princes, said to be exalted against himself, or against Ephraim, when he was Ephraim's ally? We read of no quarrel be-

8. So the ETERNAL cutteth off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day.

9.[8] [The elder and acceptable of presence, he is the head, and the prophet that teacheth falsehood he is the tail.]

10. For the directors of this people lead astray, and they that are directed of them are destroyed.

11. Therefore the Lord hath no delight in their choice youths, and no compassion on their fatherless and widows: for each one of them is profane and an evil-doer, and each mouth speaketh folly.

12. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

13. For wickedness burns like fire; it devours briar and thorn, and kindles in the thickets of the forest, until they are whirled on high *in* column of smoke.

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[8] Verse 9 is suspected to be an explanation by some early Editor, who remembered ch. iii. 18, but misapplied it to the Prophet's meaning here. An unconnected pronoun, such as *He*, Acts x. 36, or *Which*, more properly *This*, Acts viii. 26, is in both Testaments a mark of an explanatory gloss.

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tween Retzin and Pekach, though they failed to take Jerusalem. Especially why is Aram (Syria) arrayed in front against Israel?

This is a difficulty, which some boldly explain, by imagining the whole chapter written while Retzin's designs were uncertain, though his preparations were evident. Isaiah would then have supposed Retzin to threaten Ephraim, while he was going to attack Judea.

Without denying that the Prophet might err, as a man, in his application of Divinely-given faith to human contingencies, I cannot think we ought to ascribe to him error except on compulsory evidence, much less to alter the arrangement of his book, in order to do so.

14. Through the fury of the ETERNAL of hosts the land is scorched, and the people is as fuel of fire; they spare not any man his brother:

15. But each snatches on the right hand, yet is hungry; and devours on the left hand, yet are they not satisfied; they devour each man the flesh of his own arm:[9] Manasseh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh; together are they both against Judah.

16. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

17. Woe to the decreers of decrees of iniquity, and to the enactors of grievousness in their acts.

18. To turn away the feeble from judgment, and to despoil the right of the afflicted of my people; for widows to be their spoil (*Shalal*), and that they may plunder (*Baz*) the fatherless:

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[9] *His own arm, i.e.* his kinsman or fellow, as the next clause shews. It is needless to alter into friend, זרעו into רעו, with Lowth.

It is more natural to preserve the order, though we alter the division. The Assyrian stroke fell on Ephraim in 745, and is believed to have fallen on Damascus about 738 (2 Kings xvi. 9). We have seen (Isaiah vii.) in the interval, possibly in 740, the two princes threatening Jerusalem. Why should not Isaiah, foreseeing, or seeing in act (in 739 or 738) retribution upon Retzin, (with the usual circumstances of treachery accompanying downfall, and dismemberment following it), be understood to describe, as it happened, the disorder of the kingdom of Samaria, the ruin of its ally, and the co-operation of his troops in the designs of the conqueror. If the brief record, which compresses the fall of Damascus in a few words, does not relate, it leaves us free to imagine, circumstances which would explain the 4th and 5th verses;

19. And what will you do against the day of visitation, and against the ruin that comes from afar?

20. To whom will you flee for help, and where place your glory in refuge? lest each bow[1] for a prisoner, and *lest* they fall for slain men.

21. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

X.

1. Woe to Assur, the rod of my anger, and the staff of them in *whose* hand[2] *is* my indignation.

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[1] *Lest each bow;* or, *without me they bow,* as most critics. Vulg. Ne incurvemini sub vinculo, et cum interfectis cadatis.

[2] *Staff of them in whose hand;* or, "And staff (*i.e.* of my anger) is he; in their hand is my indignation." The text seems doubtful enough to disturb the construction, without obscuring the sense.

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with the exception of these, the chapter contains no difficulty.

The reader will notice vv. 6—12, 16—21, the recurrent burthen of Jehovah's arm stretched out still, as in a Greek drama the turnings of the chorus.

In verse 18, we are reminded of the name *Maher-shalal-hash-baz,* Haste-spoil, &c., though not so strikingly as in the next chapter; the Prophet having carefully marked the unity throughout the first portion of his work, by certain key-notes, the recurrence of which connects pieces which are in some respects distinct from each other.

1—3. Though Isaiah had hailed in the Assyrian a providential instrument to restrain the Syro-Samaritans, he neither liked the policy of dependence upon Assyria, nor could fail to be grieved by the oppressions of an overbearing ally. The riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria had been taken away; but farther designs against Samaria, if not against Judah, might be early betrayed.

2. Against a profane nation I send him, and against the people of my wrath I give him charge, to despoil spoil (*Shĕlōl Shalal*), and to plunder plunder (*Bōz Băz*),[3] and to make them a trampling like the mire of the streets.

3. Whereas he conceives not so, and his heart imagines not so; but to destroy is in his heart, and to cut off nations not a few.

4. For he saith, Are not my princes altogether kings?

5. Is not Calno as Carchemish? *shall* not Hamath *be* as Arpad? *shall not* Samaria *be* as Damascus?[4]

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[3] This verse should be compared with vii. 24-6, where the child's name expressed the Assyrian's mission.

[4] Calno is compared to Carchemish with direct interrogation; but Hamath and Samaria are compared to Arpad and Damascus, with an elliptical phrase, which permits us to understand a future, though it does not compel us to do so.

Since at least nine months elapsed between the interview with Ahaz, and the record of the child's birth in chapter vii., we cannot fix the composition of this chapter, except as subsequent to the fall of Damascus. If it was written as late as 712, it would express the hostility against Sennacherib, as well as the jealousy towards Tiglath-Pileser. Jeremiah reduced to writing in the fourth year of Jehoiakim his words since the reign of Josiah, which, if we understand it from Josiah's thirteenth year, would be twenty-two years. (Comp. Jer. xxxvi. 2, Jer. i. 2, 2 Kings xxii. 1.)

4. The princes of the provinces, Babylonia, Media, were subject kings, and their subjection to Nineveh precarious, and intermittent.

5. Calno, (otherwise Calneh, later Ctesiphon) on the Tigris, was subdued no less than Carchemish the island-

6. As my hand has found *to do* for the kingdoms of the god of nought, so [*will I do for*] their images out of Jerusalem and out of Samaria.[5]

7. Shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and her gods of nought, so do to Jerusalem and her images?

8. But it shall be, when the Lord finishes his whole work upon the mount of Zion and in Jerusalem, I will visit (*saith he*) upon the fruit of the greatness of heart of Assyria's king, and the glory of the loftiness of his looks;

9. Because he saith, By the strength of my hand have I wrought it, and by my wisdom, because I am understanding;

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[5] Vulg. Quomodo invenit manus mea regna Idoli, sic et simulachra eorum de Jerusalem, et de Samariâ. So I think better than the common, (A. V.) "their images, which are more than the images," &c. &c.

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town on the Euphrates, Hamath (later Epiphania) the great town of Syria, had been, or should be, as subject as *Arpad*, a smaller Syrian town, (which we must not, with the LXX, turn into *Arabia!* though I could wish it looked for nearer Babylon). Damascus, desolate in 738, was destined to be, according to one chronology, had, according to another, been already followed in ruin by Samaria. Compare 2 Kings xviii. 34, a passage too like the present, not to suggest contemporaneousness.

6, 7. The Assyrian reckons Jehovah no better than the idol-deities of the nations. The only true God may ever be expected to act according to the highest conception man can form of him; in this sense the God of the Hebrews is mightier than the gods of the nations, that the Eternal Being, towards whom both aspire, is more worthily conceived under spiritual, than under sensual, figures.

9—11. Three verses throw the proud thought of the Assyrian dramatically into the form of a speech.

10. And I have removed the boundaries of populations, and despoiled their treasuries, and cast down as a giant[6] inhabitants,

11. And my hand has found, as a nest, the wealth of the populations, and, like the gathering of eggs that are left, I have gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or twittered.[7]

12. Doth the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that moveth it? like the rod's moving them that lift it; like the staff's lifting that which is more than wood.[8]

13. Therefore the Lord, the Lord of hosts, sends among his fat ones leanness, and instead of his glory kindles a scorching, like the scorching of fire;

14. And the Light of Israel becomes a fire, and his Holy One a flame, that shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day,

15. And the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, from soul even to flesh, shall it consume, and pining shall be as one that pineth away;

16. And the remnant of the trees of his forest shall be a *little* number, so that a child may write them.

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[6] *Giant;* or, mighty one. *Inhabitants,* or dwellers *on high.* Vulg. *in sublimi residentes.*

[7] *Twittered.* A. V. peeped—as above (viii. v. 13) probably a misprint for *piped,* from Latin pipio; at least I desiderate clear usage otherwise—though the Dictionaries quote from Ben Jonson a doubtful instance.

[8] *More than wood.* Heb. not wood.

12—16. The Divine wrath, answers Isaiah, will confound the conqueror's vauntings. These verses are denunciation, such as may be termed prophecy; they are

17. And it shall be in that day, the REMNANT of Israel, and they that are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall not continue any more to lean upon their smiter; but shall lean upon the ETERNAL, the Holy One of Israel;

18. In truth shall a REMNANT TURN, a REMNANT of Jacob, to *the* mighty Hero;[9]

19. For if thy people, Israel, be as the sand of the sea, a REMNANT therein shall turn; the consumption determined brings in righteousness *as* a flood.

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[9] *Mighty Hero.* Heb El-Gibbōr—Hieron. in Comm. ad *Dominum fortem.* Compare above viii. 23; which is variously explained in Dr. Pusey's *Lectures on Daniel*, and in my own Introduction to Mr. Desprez's Daniel. The Hebrew phrase, *Lĕ-El Yadi, in the power of my hand*, throws some light on the question.

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poetry in the true sense of the word, as implying a serious exercise of the creative imagination, associated with faith in the Unseen Ruler of the world.

17. Smitten as the Ten tribes had been by one Assyrian king after another, (it is possible that here the last stroke of Samaria's fall may be included,) they had hitherto found no remedy but hugging the impost and the yoke (comp. Hosea iv. 14); but Isaiah exhorts them hopefully to lean rather upon God.

18. He anticipates at least a remnant, who in loyalty will seek the house of David, and follow the Mighty Chieftain whom he now sees raised up over it. The use of *El-Gibbor* here is the only noteworthy argument of those who translate it *Mighty God* in the preceding chapter. A consideration of the sequence of thought, (to which Jerome's better rendering in his Commentary, *fortem Dominum*, should be added,) shews this passage to be conclusive for the human sense.

19. As in Judah but a few not degenerate, so in Israel but a remnant faithful and spared.

20. For an utter work, and *a thing* determined, the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts, is working in the midst of all the land.

XI.

1. Therefore thus saith the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts, Fear not, my people that dwellest in Zion, from the Assyrian, *lest* he smite thee with a rod, and lift up his staff upon thee after the manner of Egypt :[1]

2. For yet a very little while, and *my* indignation [*with thee*] shall be concluded, and my anger shall be in their destruction ;

3. And the ETERNAL of hosts is stirring up against him a scourge, like the stroke upon Midian at the rock of Oreb, and his rod *shall be* upon the sea, and he shall lift it up after the manner of *his lifting it upon* Egypt ;

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[1] *After the manner of Egypt ;* or, literally, in the way from Egypt ; since Sennacherib's army fell in the desert towards Egypt. Comp. Herod. ii. 141. Though no critic has suggested this, I think it possible enough for consideration. Similarly Amos iii. 17. (A. V. iv. 10.)

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20. So utter is Israel's downfall.

1. This chapter both contains and wants some passages, which seem as if they might well have been otherwise placed. Accepting the arrangement as it stands, but with an improved division, the connexion of thought may be thus explained.

Isaiah, after dwelling on the failure of the Syro-Samaritan league, and on the Assyrian tyranny which followed, proceeds to encourage Jerusalem against the fear of falling under the same rod. He bids look for a slaughter of the Assyrian, as of the Midianite. (Judges vii.) Enhancing the deliverance by contrasting the imminence of the danger, he throws in (vv. 5—8) a description of the

4. And it shall be in that day, his burden shall be removed from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be broken for very[2] fatness.[3]

5. He is come to Aiath, he has passed by Migron, at Michmash he halts his panoply;[4]

6. They have passed through the Pass; Geba *is* the resting-place *where* they rest; Ramah is terrified, Gibeah of Saul takes to flight.

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[2] *For very fatness;* or, from off the anointed faces.

[3] *Note.* Either after this 4th verse, or below, after the 9th verse, the reader is recommended to read verses 1, 2, 3, 4, of chap. xiii. which are in A. V. xiv. 24—27.

[4] *Halts his panoply;* or, deposits his baggage.

Assyrian's march, whether of Sennacherib's, 713, as most critics think, or, as I should prefer, of part of Shalmaneser's army detached from Samaria's siege, 721. Since the approach is from the North, the latest threats of Sennacherib can not be intended; his previous march southwards may be. My inclination is to make this piece not ideal, but descriptive of a reality synchronous with Micah's first chapter. The Assyrian host passed by harmless; but, if it were Sennacherib's, not without being doomed to early retribution. Although we are not able to fix the denunciatory poems, so as to be sure that they preceded the events, and an ideal element is implied in their form, we can have no doubt that Isaiah counselled Hezekiah resistance; whether his inspiration took the form of sagacity, or of courage, it was justified.

After describing the boasts, and celebrating the failure of the invader, who, though he may have felled the goodly trees of Lebanon and Ephraim, is in turn hewn down by the stroke of the Lord of hosts, Isaiah proceeds to contrast the happier auguries of young Hezekiah's reign, and suffers hope to swell his magnificent song.

5—8. These places, mostly in the tribe of Benjamin,

7. Shriek with thy voice, daughter of Gallim ; cause it to be heard unto Laish ; make answer, Anathoth.[5]

8. Madmenah is fugitive; the inhabitants of Gebim seek refuge.

9. The day is yet for him to halt at Nob; *where* he waves his hand *against* the mount of the temple[6] of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.[7]

10. Behold the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts, lopping off the bough with terror; so that the lofty of stature are hewn down, and the haughty are humbled ;

11. Yea stricken are the forest thickets with iron, and Lebanon falls by the mighty ;

12. But a rod comes forth out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots flourishes ;

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[5] *Make answer, Anathoth.* Though this rendering, instead of *poor* Anathoth, requires a change of punctuation, it is supported by the Syriac Version, and adopted by critics so unlike each other as Lowth and Ewald.

[6] *Temple*, or daughter.

[7] See note above, after verse 4, and compare ch. xiii. 1—4.

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are all within twelve miles north of Jerusalem, from Aiath, or Ai, the old fort on the precipice, south-east of Bethel, to Nob, formerly a home of Priests, north-east of the Mount of Olives. Most of the names occur in Saul's history ; especially the pass of Michmash or Gibea, between two rocks, Botzetz and Seneh, 1 Sam. xiv. 4. The point of the description lies in the growing terror at each nearing step to the city of peace. The account corresponds in 2 Kings xix. especially vv. 23—33 ; the similarity, however, not being an absolute proof of identity.

9, 10. True, the Lord has permitted the invader to lay low the pride of the Northern realm ; but so little by his own strength, that he in turn is destined to the axe.

11. Unlike the transient glory of those unblest realms, the City and House of David put forth a fresh growth ;

13. And the breath of the ETERNAL rests upon him; the breath of wisdom and understanding, the breath of counsel and of MIGHT, the breath of the knowledge and fear of the ETERNAL;

14. So that it inspires him[8] with the fear of the ETERNAL, that he may not judge after the sight of his eyes, and not rebuke after the hearing of his ears;

15. But that he may judge with righteousness the poor, and redress with equity the needy of the land: and he shall smite the land[9] with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

16. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

17. So the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the panther couch with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling *shall go together*, while a little child leads them:

18. And the cow and the bear shall feed, *so that* their young ones couch together; and the lion, as the ox, shall eat straw.

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[8] *It inspires him*; or, his delight is. The Hebrew verb means, to breathe, inspire, snuff up as incense with pleasure. So three or four renderings are possible; but the context suggests preference for the idea of inspiring, and throws a true light on the Biblical idea of inspiration, as a Divine impulse, animating, but not superseding, the free, yet limited, agency of man.

[9] *Smite the land*. Hebr. Text אֶרֶץ: but the parallelism suggests עָרִיץ terrible, or some similar word, standing in parallel to the wicked of the next clause. Verse 15 is to be the effect of verse 13.

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that is, the young king, here, I doubt not, intended as already reigning. See above notes on ch. viii. 19—24.

16—20. Lowth, and others, have brought together illustrations from many poets:

"Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni
"Occidet, &c."

19. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child stretch its hand over the horned serpent's den.

20. They shall not hurt, and not destroy, in all the mount of my sanctuary ; for the land shall be full[1] of the knowledge of the ETERNAL, as the waters cover the sea.

21. And it shall be in that day, the root of Jesse which stands for a banner of populations, nations shall seek to it, and its resting-place shall be glorious.

[1] *Land shall be full.* So the Hebrew here, but when the verse is adopted in Habbakuk ii. 14, the same Hebrew word seems used in the wider sense of Earth.

shewing how readily imagination dresses hope in figures too bold for logical analysis.

Will the world ever become all peace? There is a tendency in noxious things and races, to lessen; in better things, to expand; (Comp. Butler, Analogy, c. iii. §. 5. "On the Moral Government of God;") but this tendency must always in a scheme of organization, birth, and decay, find limits. If that which is undying in us ever attains (as we must trust God of His mercy will grant) that which its groaning not to be uttered aims at, it must be in such a spiritual sphere as the wisdom of India, Hellas, and primeval Britain conceived, rather than in so earthly a millennium as the majority of desires in the Old Testament seem to paint. So far as these latter are fulfilled, it will not be by the serpent's unlearning the use of his fang, or by the lion's eating straw, but by both becoming extinct. The manifest figurativeness of images taken from lions and serpents, may suggest that images within the sphere of possibility have also their tinge of poetical feeling, and are not to be pressed severely.

20—22. When the Assyrian is smitten, there will be a prospect of David's dynasty flourishing in Jerusalem, and

22. And it shall be in that day, the Lord shall set to his hand again a second time to redeem the REMNANT of his people which shall remain, from Assyria, and from Mizraim, and from Pathros, from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the isles of the sea,

23. And he shall lift up a banner to the nations, and gather the outcasts of Israel, and assemble the dispersed of Judah from the four wings of the earth;

24. And the jealousy of Ephraim shall depart, and the oppressors of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, neither Judah oppress Ephraim.

25. But they shall come with wings upon the shoulder

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of God's restoring to Palestine both the captives of Shalmaneser, &c., and all exiles scattered from Judah by war or slavery in northern or southern Egypt, Ethiopia, Persia, Babylonia, Syria, and the Mediterranean isles. This would be another such deliverance as from Egypt. We may notice, this anticipation is 170 years before the return from Babylon; (which Isaiah is not thinking of, but) so far as it is fulfilled thereby, the strictest views of prediction need not bind us to look for a third restoration of the Jews. Jehovah set to his hand a first time under Moses; a second time under Cyrus.

23. The oppressors to be cut off, may be those who oppress Judah; or those who out of Judah oppress Ephraim.

24. In the Exode from Egypt a people half shepherds, half slaves, were obliged to avoid the territory of the more civilised Philistines; whereas from Assyria their civilised neighbours will favour them; both sides of Jordan becoming all their own. The colouring of the vision is local.

of the Philistines to the sea ;[2] together shall they plunder the sons of the East ; Edom and Moab shall be the casting forth[3] of their hand, and the sons of Ammon their subjection.

26. And the ETERNAL shall give over the tongue of Egypt's sea to destruction,[4] and wave his hand over the river with the terror[5] of his blast, and smite it into seven streams, until a man find his way dry-shod ;

27. Until there be a causeway for the REMNANT of his people which shall remain from Assyria ; as was to Israel in the day of his coming up from the land of Egypt.

28. So that thou sayest in that day, I acknowledge

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[2] *To the sea ;* or, westwards.

[3] *Casting forth ;* or, grasping.

[4] *Give over to destruction, i.e.* as with a *cherem*, or solemn vow. Or else shall utterly dry up, taking החרים, as החריב, which has ample authority, but is needless. Comp. Joshua vi. 17. Micah iv. 5.

[5] *Terror, i.e.* taking the unknown word עים as אים. LXX. *πνεύματι βιαίῳ*. Vulg. In fortitudine spiritus sui. If to such differences as the two here given, we add legitimate varieties of opinion as to the inter-punctuation of sentences (supposing the Masora not conclusive on that point), we shall have a fair measure of the margin for opinion in rendering the Prophets, and see how little it affects our security as to their substantial meaning.

25, 26. Egypt still supplies imagery, but a return from Assyria is intended. We must conclude, that the passage of the Red Sea, having been celebrated in song from the days of Solomon at latest, was as generally believed in Isaiah's time as it is in our own. Cyrus dividing the river Gyndes into 360 trenches, Herod. i. 189, is quoted here ; not so appropriately as Psalm cvi. 9.

27—32. The rest of the chapter (A. V. ch. xii.) may from slight variation of style belong to a later age, possibly the return from Exile, and have been inserted here. If this be so, the insertion suits admirably, and may as well remain here.

thee, O ETERNAL, for thou hast been wroth with me; thy anger turneth away, and thou comfortest me.

29. Behold, God is my salvation, so that I am confident, and will not fear; for my strength and my song is JAH the ETERNAL,[6] and he becomes to me salvation.

30. So shall you draw waters with joy out of the wells of salvation.[7]

31. And you shall say in that day, Give thanks to the ETERNAL, call upon his name; make his exploits known among the populations; commemorate, for his name is exalted.

32. Praise the ETERNAL, for he has wrought triumph; let this be made known in all the earth.

33. Shout and rejoice, inhabitress of Zion; for great in thy midst is the Holy One of Israel.[8]

HERE ENDS THE FIRST CLEAR PART OF ISAIAH.

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[6] *Jah the Eternal.* Hebr. Jah Jehovah; unless the second be a misreading for the verb יהיה, which may be the case.

[7] *Wells of salvation;* or, fountains of triumph; the word salvation, or safety, in this and the preceding verse, having the sense of secular triumph, as in the common name Joshua.

[8] The last three verses (31—33) are a little psalm.

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29. This verse was used on the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. A comparison of its literal sense with the spiritual words of Christ, St. John vii. 37, 38, and iv. 10—14, will enable us, better than dissertation, to understand how sayings of the Old Testament are inverted in the New, by being raised to a higher power. The fulfilment of Prophecy is sometimes by exemplification; far oftener by contrast.

XII.

A burden[1] *on Babylon, which Isaiah son of Amoz saw in vision.*

[1] *Burden.* Heb. Utterance ; as in English "*burden* of a song"—a secondary meaning, which may have flowed traditionally from a mistaken rendering of the old Versions, which used burden in the sense of affliction. *Cf. Jer.* xxiii. 33-36.

1—40. The distinctness of this chapter from what went before is shewn both by the subject, Babylon instead of Assyria ; and by a fresh title, which mentions the author's name, not as he would have done himself in the middle of a collection of his works ; but as a later editor might, who assigned the piece to him by conjecture. If, after finishing Assyria, the rest of the Prophet were occupied with Babylon, we could understand the transition from one great empire to another. But a difficulty arises, when we observe that the next chapter returns to Assyria in a passage, the abrupt strain of which denotes it to have been detached from our preceding, or eleventh, chapter. How could the Prophet, talking of Shalmaneser and Sennacherib, 721-700 B.C. introduce suddenly an elaborate description of the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, 550-530 B.C. ; and again revert to Assyria and Sennacherib, without dropping a hint of transition or of connexion ?

It may be asked, whether under the name of Babel, which is one of ancient renown, the Prophet may not be describing the fall of the Assyrian Nineveh, which Medes and Babylonians overthrew 625-606 B.C. ? This supposition is negatived by the distinctness with which the Chaldees are mentioned, and by many circumstances, such as the want of connexion between the fall of Nineveh and the return of the Jews from exile.

Did then Isaiah, a full century before the captivity commenced, not only predict its occurrence, but describe the

manner in which it should be brought to a termination, half a century later still? As we have no right to say, without examination, that such prediction would be impossible, so neither ought we to assume, without evidence, that it must have been delivered antecedently to the event. What then is our evidence for ascribing this Babylonian chapter to Isaiah? The title prefixed to the chapter, is by an unknown editor, of unknown age, and may have arisen out of any one of many impressions, which we can not know to have been trustworthy. Divine inspiration can hardly be claimed for the titles. The uncertainty, ill relieved by conjecture, as to the place and manner in which the prophetical writings were originally preserved, the confusion which must have ensued during the Babylonian captivity, the long period of re-arrangement, which commencing with Ezra hardly ended before the consolidation of the Asmonean kingdom little more than a century before the Christian era, must be considered altogether as sufficient to render the question of authorship an open one.

Is the style Isaiah's style? The greatest masters of Hebrew criticism answer in the negative. It is more flowing; it abounds in expressions frequent in the later Prophets; as the English reader may best see by comparing the 50th and 51st chapters of Jeremiah. It uses some of Isaiah's favourite words with a variation of sense. Thus *Sheōl* had been described, ch. v. 14. as the grave receiving the pomp of the fallen; whereas in chap. xii. it is expanded into a grander idea of the under-world, where the kings of the dead sit on thrones, but stand up to meet the Babylonian. I would not be understood, as if the difference of verbal colour in style appeared to my own ear sufficient alone to justify the dissociation of this chapter from Isaiah. Many both of the thoughts and phrases appear to me so remarkably like, that, if the author is not Isaiah, he imitated Isaiah. The invaders are with both the "weapons of Jehovah's indignation," and so on. Still there appears

1. Upon the bare mountain lift up a banner, raise a shout to them, wave the hand, that they may enter the gates of princes.[2]

2. I have given command to my consecrated ones, I have also called my men of might for my wrath, my *host* rampant in haughtiness.

[2] *Enter the gates of princes*; or, that the drawn swords of the foreign troopers may come.

to me a difference : as to the generality of more eminent scholars. The two reasons which most weigh with me are (1) the manifest interruption in Isaiah's treatment of Assyria ; and (2) the tone of the description, in respect of time, which is, on the whole, of the present instant, and not of the remote future. I must conclude, that this chapter was written, or at least conceived, during the Medo-Persic conquest of Babylon under Cyrus. It's author is no way inferior in genius to Isaiah, whom he imitated ; possibly in imagery he may be thought grander ; his moral tone is fiercer, in identifying Israel's enemies with God's enemies ; this being the natural effect of half a century of suffering, superadded to the exclusive tendencies of the Levitical law, if not of the Hebrew race. The English reader, whatever he may think of the question of authorship, may not the less expect to find the chapter, where he has been accustomed to read it.

1—5. There was an interval, according to Herodotus, between the first conflict of Cyrus with the Babylonians, and his capture of their city. At such a time an exiled Jew in Babylon seems represented as conceiving of the invasion as Jehovah's vengeance. The swords are consecrated by the God of battles to liberate his people. The mountains which separate Babylonia from Media echo with the tramp of a host, whose home was beyond the horizon with which the speaker was familiar. The wild wail of the East, natural to emotional persons in the presence of

3. *There is* the noise of a multitude in the mountains, in the fashion of a great people ; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together ; the ETERNAL of hosts is mustering the host for the battle.

4. They are coming from a land afar, from the extremity of the heavens ; the ETERNAL, and the weapons of his indignation, to confound the whole land.

5. Howl, for the ETERNAL'S day is at hand ; as destruction from God the destroyer,[3] it is on its way.

6. Therefore are all hands faint, and every heart of man melts, so that they are confounded.

7. Anguish and pangs take hold of *them ;* they travail like a woman bearing child ; they look amazed, each one on his neighbour ; their faces are faces of flame.

8. Behold, the day of the ETERNAL is come, cruel and wrathful,[4] and a day of fierce disdain, to make the land a desolation, and that he may destroy the sinners thereof out of it.

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[3] *Destroyer ;* or, Almighty. See Joel i. 14 ; Exodus vi. 3.
[4] *Cruel and wrathful ;* or, his fierceness and his wrath, &c.

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immense calamity, but formalised into a habit amongst dervishes and monks, is here invoked with poetical intensity ; the sons of the Prophets may have practised it. The fifth verse is throughout an imitation of Joel ; other expressions are so less strikingly.

6—8. The pangs of travail, as a familiar image of anxiety, must be distinguished here, as in St. John xvi. 21, and I believe in Micah iv. 1, 2 (A. V. iv. 9, 10), from any such actual childbirth as appears in Isaiah vii. viii.

9. As the shaken heavens and falling stars are here civil and social change, they may be so in Christ's speeches in the Gospels. I remark this, not wishing to restrict the

9. For the stars of the heavens, and their giant-stars[5] let not their light shine; the sun is darkened in his going forth, and the moon shews not her brightness.[6]

10. But I visit evil on the world, and their iniquity on the wicked; and I cause the pride of the arrogant to cease, and lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

11. I am making man scarcer than fine gold; mankind *rarer* than the golden wedge of Ophir.[7]

12. Therefore make I the heavens tremble, and the

[5] *Giant-stars*; or, constellations; so Jerome, whose Hebrew teacher made it mean the Great Bear; other Jews made it Sirius or Canopus; LXX. Orion; Chaldee, the Apostate, *i. e.* Nimrod, who in later Semitic astronomy is made to answer to the Greek Orion. I doubt the antiquity, or so to say, the "Scripturalness" of this adaptation in Hebrew, and follow Gesenius (Note on this pl.) in suspecting a root with the sense of effulgence. Comp. Jerome's note on Amos iv. 5, (A. V. v. 8.) and Job ix. 9, xxxviii. 31.

[6] *Shews not her brightness.* Heb. brightens not her light.

[7] *Wedge of Ophir.* LXX. ὁ λίθος ὁ ἐν Σουφίρ. This rendering of the name points to India for Ophir; as do the ivory, sandal-wood, apes and peacocks, of Solomon's trade, 1 Kings ix. x. But the name may have belonged properly to some port in the Arabian peninsula, where Indian wares could be obtained, and have acquired, as the word Tarshish did, a wider usage. There is little, beyond an ancient gold-market at Sofala, to urge for the West Coast of Africa.

horizon of the New Testament life to come within the limits of a mere regeneration of Earth and her institutions but as pointing out the origin of the expressions. Whether on the whole our cause loses or gains, by making Christ in denouncing a last judgment, mean earthly things, and be understood of heavenly; or mean heavenly things, but be misunderstood as to circumstances of time and place; or use imagery, which was at first local and temporal, but admitted of adaptation to the better hope of an eternal inheritance, are questions too complicated for this note. Something would be gained, if those who attempt the solution, would clearly apprehend what the questions involve.

11—15. From the eleventh to the fifteenth verse, it is

earth quakes out of her place ; at the wrath of the ETERNAL of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

13. So they shall be as deer that are scattered, and as sheep when no man gathers them ; every one to his own people they turn, and each to his own land they fly.

14. Every one that is found shall be thrust through ; and every one that rallies shall fall by the sword.

15. And their children shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be plundered, and their wives ravished.

16. Behold me raising against them the Medes, who regard not silver; and gold, they have no delight in it.

17. But their bows dash down the young lads, and on the fruit of the womb they have no compassion, and their eye has no pity on children.

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a matter of feeling or taste, rather than of certainty, whether the tenses shall be treated as future or as present. Even as futures, they may be used dramatically of the counsels of God; the reaching back into thought of the causes of events before the eyes. In verse 16, the most emphatically present tense is used which the Hebrew language possesses.

16, 17. The Medes have been so long dominant, that they give name to the host of Cyrus, in which they are become subordinate to their Persian kinsmen. Their lordly and chivalrous humour, swelling into arrogance, and their fierce carelessness of gain, struck the Greeks as Hebrews. Xenophon makes the younger Cyrus say that the Medes had not followed him for money's sake, but for fame. With Herodotus the Persians are ὑβρισταί, overbearing, and with Ammianus *magnidici*, large-spoken. Cruelty to children is implied in the story that Astyages made Harpagus eat the flesh of his own son.

18. So Babel, the beauty of kingdoms, the excellence of the pride of the Chaldees, becomes like God's overthrowing of Sodom and of Gomorrhah.

19. It shall not be inhabited for ever, and shall not be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian light fire there,[8] and shepherds shall not couch there.

20. But desert creatures[9] shall couch there, and fill their

[8] *Light fire*; or, pitch tent.
[9] *Desert creatures*; or, lions.

18, 19. Babylon passed from the Chaldees to the Persians in a time which was near, and in days which were not prolonged. It continued populous, though tending downwards, for two centuries and a half, through the Persian dominion and Alexander's reign, from about 540 B.C. to about 290 B.C., when Seleucus, by founding several great cities, created new centres, and especially transferred to Seleucia on the Tigris, 300 stadia distant, many of the inhabitants. [Strabo, *Assyria*, xvi. 3, A. 1073.] Babylon thus became, not indeed desolate, but so thinly peopled, that in the Augustan age Strabo applies to it the sarcasm on the short-lived metropolis of Arcadia, ἐρημία μεγάλη ἐστιν ἡ μεγάλη πόλις. The great city is a great solitude. Four centuries later, a monk told Jerome it was a hunting-ground [*venationes regias*]. In our age, travellers differ as to the site of its ruins. (Layard's Nineveh, Part ii. ch. i.) It should be remarked, that as dynasties changed the transpopulation which made Babylon decline was frequently repeated; as under Seleucus, for the benefit of Seleucia, so under the Parthians for the benefit of Ctesiphon, under the Arabs for that of Baghdad. (Layard, vol. ii. p. 175.)

20, 21. According to an interpretation once preferred as orthodox, (comp. August. De Civ. xv. 23; 2 Bochart.

houses with howlings ;[1] and the ostrich's daughters shall dwell there, and shaggy creatures dance there; and wolves shall echo in their widowed abodes,[2] and jackals in their palaces of pleasure.

21. Yea, her time is near in coming, and her days shall not be prolonged.

22. For JEHOVAH has compassion on Jacob, and chooses Israel again, to give them rest in their own land, and that the stranger may be joined to them;

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[1] *Fill with howlings;* or, owls shall fill.

[2] *Widowed abodes.* The Hebrew says, widowhoods, but probably by a slip of a letter for a word meaning palaces.

Hieroz. vi. 7,) we ought, by "desert creatures," "shaggy creatures," and "jackals" to understand demons, fauns, satyrs, or other such apparitions. "Nos aut dæmonas aut monstra quædam vel certè dracones magnos interpretati sumus," says Jerome. Such an interpretation is now chiefly confined to those who have no objection to find Eastern superstition in the Prophet, while those who estimate his authority highly, prefer interpreting him of the natural denizens of the desert. The question for us ought to be, which did the Prophet mean? I believe he meant wild animals; but this belief proceeds on the assumption that there was a time when nobler minds among the Hebrews occupied a higher level of thought than belongs ordinarily to the East. It cannot be denied that the Arabs and other Orientals now (as the poetically superstitious elsewhere) see *ghouls, gins,* and phantoms haunting ancient ruins. On the other hand in Psalm xci. 6, the Septuagint, fruitful authors of error, quite needlessly turned the destruction of noon-day into the noon-day demon, δαιμονίου μεσημβρινοῦ.

22. By joining this verse with the preceding, we see

23. And populations shall be combined[3] with the house of Jacob, and shall take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel shall inherit them in Jehovah's land for servants and for handmaids,

24. And they shall take captive those whose captives they were, and shall rule over their oppressors.

25. And it shall be in the day of JEHOVAH'S giving thee rest from thy sorrow and from thy trembling, and from the hard servitude wherein thou wast made to serve,

26. Then shalt thou lift up this proverb[4] against the

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[3] *Populations shall be combined.* This clause by punctuation, and perhaps by parallelism, belongs to the preceding verse ; but the nominative subject *Populations* is connected also in thought with the following verb, *shall take*. Hence the division here adopted may be most explanatory to the English reader.

[4] *Proverb*, i. e. Parable, or song.

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the connexion of thought. The restoration which the writer hopes for his people is his motive to exultation over the success of Cyrus, which he has seen; the desolation of Babel which he expects to follow is an anticipation, destined in long ages to find fulfilment, though not in the hour or manner conceived by a man, to whom (as the words of the Lord Jesus may teach us) God had not made known the times and the seasons. The pure-minded Roman, seeing Carthage in flames, could exclaim from Homer, as his thoughts turned on his own country:

> "A day of doom shall be for sacred Troy,
> For Priam, and for warlike Priam's host."

26—31. The poetical sublimity of this triumphal Ode, with its taunts too true to the mood of the oppressed, speaks best for itself. The development of Shĕōl, the hollow place, from the mere grave, into a subterranean receptacle of the Departed, may be compared with the

king of Babel, and say, How has the oppressor ceased! exaction[5] come to an end!

27. JEHOVAH has shivered the staff of the wicked, the rod of them that bare rule, that smote populations in wrath with a stroke that never ceased, that ruled nations with disdain,[6] that persecuted, and no man hindered.[7]

28.[8] The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: even the fir-trees burst forth into song, the cedars of Lebanon rejoice over thee; Since thou art fallen, the hewer down is not come up against us.

29. The under-world beneath is moved for thee, to meet

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[5] *Exaction.* Heb. *Madheavah.* If this word be rightly translated *Golden* (golden city, A. V.) it is the Chaldaic form of the Hebrew derivative of *Zahav*, and is a philological sign of the lateness of this chapter: (or else of the earlier Isaiah's knowing what we call Chaldee, B.C. 713); but the Greek ἐπισπουδαστής, Latin *tributum*, and the Chaldee and Syriac with similar versions, agree so far as to imply a various reading, as e. g. *Marheavah*, persecution. In any case it is certain that the word meant some imposition on the captives, and not a description of the city.

[6] *Disdain.* Heb. nostril.

[7] *That persecuted and no man hindered.* Gr. παίων. Lat. persequentem crudeliter. It was a prosaic misconception of the Masora, which deserting the path opened by the old Versions treated מרדף as a passive. Hence A. V. was misled.

[8] The common punctuation leaves in this verse a verb with no noun; in the next a noun with no verb. By joining the two, we restore a beautiful connexion of ideas. Houbigant (whom I would not follow without the rhythm as my guide) had preceded me in observing this.

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interpretation of *ad Inferos* in the Creed, in which a phrase meaning in the Aquileian Creed the Grave, was taken in the Roman Creed as the *place of spirits*, and with Calvin and Beveridge became a place of fiery torment of the damned; though by philosophers like Durandus explained into the virtuality instead of locality of death. The passage before us, combined with Samuel's rising to the invocation of the Witch of Endor, may imply that the old

thy coming; it rouses for thee the silent,[9] it has made all the mighty of the earth stand up from their thrones.

30. All the kings of the nations,[1] all of them answer, and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou likened unto us?

31. Brought down to the Hollow is thy pomp, the sound of thy harpstrings; beneath thee is spread the grub, and thy covering the worm.

32. How art thou fallen from the heavens, bright one,[2] son of the dawn; thou art hewn down to the ground, thou that lordedst it over nations.

33. Whereas thou saidst in thine heart, I will ascend into the heavens, I will exalt my throne above the stars

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[9] The *silent*. Heb. *Rephaim*, the name of a Canaanite race, so lost in dim antiquity, that it became a poetic synonym for the dead; the etymology aiding the connexion.

[1] *All the kings of the nations*. These words are punctuated ordinarily into the preceding verse, but hardly belong to it in conception. See below, vv. 30, 36.

[2] *Bright one;* or, *Howl, i. e.* Wail; which may be truer to the Hebrew though not to most Versions. Jerome says well: "Pro eo quod nos interpretati sumus . . . . lucifer, qui mane oriebaris, in Hebraico . . ad verbum legitur, Ulula, fili diluculi." So the Syriac, Rosenmüller, and doubtfully Gesenius: but the Greek, Chaldee, and most moderns, as above.

Hebrew conceptions of the souls of the Dead were not so earthly and materialistic as the earlier and larger part of the Old Testament suggests. Whether the gradual spiritualisation of conception grew up at home, or was imported from without (as in this chapter the language may have a Chaldaic tinge), is a point of battle between schools of expositors.

32, 33. Some find in these verses an allusion to Mount Zion, others unnecessarily the heathen conception (Greek, Indian, possibly Babylonian) of a mountain, the home and banqueting-hall of the gods. Still less, however,

of God; and will sit upon the mount of the assembly, within the recesses of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will liken myself to the Most High.

34. Yet to the Hollow art thou brought down; to the recesses of the pit.

35. They that see thee gaze upon thee; they reflect upon thee, Is this the man that made the earth tremble, that made kingdoms quake; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed its cities; and who loosened not his prisoners homeward?

36. All the kings of the nations all of them lie in glory, every one in his own mansion;

37. Whereas thou art cast away from thy burial as a stick despised, clothed with[3] the slain, that are pierced with sword, that go down to the stones of the pit, like a carcase trampled.

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[6] *Clothed with*; or, as raiment of.

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must we introduce Lucifer and his fallen angels. The daring flight of poetry sufficiently explains the terms in which the bright abodes of the Blest are contrasted with the nether gloom of Hades. Comp. Psalm cxxxix. 8.

36—38. For the kings of Judah "great burnings were made." The Assyrians affected incense, as the Egyptians embalmment. With the strange exception of the Hyrcanians, who kept dogs at the public expense to devour the remains of the poor, and privately to do the same office for princes, burial (or amongst those who used fire, conservation of the dust) in monuments of stone has been the privilege of the dead in most countries. The tomb and column of the Greek, the cellular chamber for urns of the Roman, the Cairn and Cromlech of the Western races of Europe, the sepulchral caves of Palestine and treasure-

38. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, for thou hast destroyed thy land, thou hast slain thy people; the seed of evil-doers shall have no name[4] for ever.

39. Prepare slaughter for his sons for the iniquity of their fathers; lest they rise, and inherit the land, and fill the face of the world with cities.[5]

40. But I am risen against them, is the saying of JEHOVAH of hosts, to cut off from Babel name, and remnant, and son, and grandson, is JEHOVAH's saying: and I make it a possession for the bittern,[6] and pools of water, and I sweep it with the besom[7] of destruction, is the saying of JEHOVAH of hosts.

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[4] *Shall have no name.* Heb. shall not be called.

[5] *Cities;* or, enemies. So the Greek, Chaldee, Ges. Rosen. and others. The context, and the use of the word imply cities. The verb *fill* may be taken intransitively, and face of the world become its subject.

[6] *Bittern,* or hedgehog; as in xxix. 11.

[7] *Sweep it with the besom.* So an immense crowd of authorities, specially Rabbinical, who seem to have guessed the meaning of an obscure word. The LXX. have *θήσω αὐτὴν πηλοῦ βάραθρον εἰς ἀπώλειαν.* Hence, by comparing an Arabic verb, *to dig deeply,* Michaelis, Lowth, and others get the sense here, "I will dig it into a pit of destruction,"— which, except for the weight of interpreters against it, might be the more probable sense. Comp, Rosenm. and Ges., Ewald, Knobel.

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chambers of Assyria, attest an instinct to which the exposure on sacred waters by modern Hindus renders India partially an exception. Labynetus, or Nabonadius, the last king of Babylon, would be left without such honours. Whether he was more cruel, or less fortunate, than preceding kings, there is little to shew, unless it be that Xenophon (Cyropæd. iii. iv.) represents him as provoking the revolt of Gobryas by the murder of his son, and thereby precipitating his country's fall. But the Cyropædia is usually considered a romance. It also represents Cyrus as allowing the Babylonians burial.

*** It has been assumed above, that the Chaldees were a people distinctively Babylonian, and it may be asked whether the assumption is justifiable. Do we know even to what family of nations the Chaldees belonged?

The name which we translate Chaldees is in Hebrew *Chasdim*, כשדים. We find it first in Genesis xi. 28—31, connected with Abraham's ancestral city, Ur-Chasdim, in the north-east of Mesopotamia, north-west from Nineveh. Again in Genesis xxii. 22, *Chesed*, the patriarch of the Chasdim, appears with Kemuel, the Syrian or Aramite patriarch, among Nahor's children and Abraham's nephews. From this genealogy, as well as from the tradition which makes Abraham a ruler of Damascus (Joseph. *Ant.* i. 7, 2,) we should expect an affinity of race between Chasdim, Aramite, and Hebrew. The expectation is just what a comparison of the Chaldaic, Syriac, and Hebrew languages confirms, and the confirmation becomes more striking, if, adding Arabia, we throw our eye over the geographical area across which this family of languages extends, from the south of ancient Armenia, to the north-eastern coast of Africa. The Semitic origin of the Chaldæans remains philologically the most natural opinion, as it is the easiest to reconcile with Scripture, with Josephus, and with the authors quoted by him; whether he is right or wrong (one may suspect him wrong) in understanding Berossus to have alluded to Abraham.

With Herodotus, i. 181, vii. 63, and Strabo, *Assyria*, xvi. the Chaldees appear in a special character, but in one eminently congenial to their Semitic origin. They are priests, Assyrians, philosophers who affect a religious life, and astronomers, divided into schools; the nobler of which disdains the pretenders to astrology. They have a settlement, which is the southern boundary of Babylonia. This geographical distinction does not prevent them from

playing such a part in Babylon, as belonged to the Magi in Persia, the Levites in Palestine, the Druids and Brahmans in Britain and India. The religion ascribed to them has not the nobleness of the Persian, but such characteristics as we may imagine to have repelled Abraham, when he arose and went into a far country. The Book of Daniel, amongst other points which distinguish it from the earlier Prophets, follows the Greek writers in ascribing to the Chaldees a sacerdotal character. It also calls their language Aramite. They may have been a clan, and have become a caste. The name *Arpa-chasad* (Gen. xi. 10 ; Jos. *Ant.* i. 6, 4) helps us to fix their home as belonging originally to the northernmost part of the Semitic area, in which their traces still survive. Once settled, however, in Babylon, whether they wrested it from Cushite founders, or as is more likely, recovered it from a dynasty of Cushite invaders, they became as an urban people indelibly associated with it, and though the Assyrians of Nineveh appear of kindred race, and the histories of both frequently interlace, we never read of Chasdim (Chaldees) at Nineveh. There is nothing impossible in the statement of Berossus, that Median kings reigned in Babylon for two centuries, from B.C. 2234 to 2011, and it may be a matter for conjecture, whether they might not leave a Magian tinge behind ; nevertheless, the grand current of the city's history is Semitic, and its indigenous population are Chasdim.

On the other hand, it has been noticed, that tribes bearing the Greek name which we employ as an equivalent for Chasdim are mentioned by Xenophon (Anab. iv. 3, 4, and Cyrop. iii. 2, 7) as inhabiting Armenia, and the mountain range of Kurdistan (the Carduchian or Gordiæan mountains), while Strabo (xii. 3, 19) would extend them under the name of Chalybes, northwards to the Euxine. The warlike attributes which the Prophets ascribe to the Chaldees, " that bitter and hasty nation," are pointed

out as unlike the description of a religious caste. Above all, stress is laid upon a passage in Isaiah xx. 13, (A. V. xxiii. 13) which is understood as if the Assyrian had about 718 recently planted the Chaldees in Babylon. To this is added some exaggeration of the difficulty found in interpreting Babylonian names. Hence it has been contended, not unfrequently, that the Chaldeans of Nebuchadnezzar were a new nation, developed out of the fierce soldiery of the Assyrian, and by some, as Gesenius and Jahn, that they were Kurds, hence it would seem, of Persian affinity; but by others, that they were at least some offshoot of the Indo-European stock; *e.g.* with Michaelis, that they were Sclavonian; or, again by others, that they were Scythian, *i. e.* Tartars. We shall find it not unimportant to have a clear idea, whether they are, according to the older tradition, Semitic, or, according to a variety of the newer hypothesis, Indo-European. With profound deference to the manes of the eminent scholars ranged in favour of this latter view, I believe it proceeds on as many errors as it contains propositions.

The passage in Isaiah (A. V. xxiii. 13) will be found to describe the ruin of continental Tyre, which was so utterly in the Chaldean's hand, that the Tyrians must fly to Cilicia, Cyprus, and Spain. When this connexion of thought is mastered, we shall not be easily induced to think any settlement in Babylon described. If any transfer of a Chaldaic population is implied, such a thing may be conjectured of Esarhaddon, when he renewed the subjection of Babylon to Nineveh; or we may with some probability imagine a settlement of Kurds in the land which the northern Chaldees, the mountaineers of the race, once called their own. Again, as to Xenophon, it is overlooked, that he distinguishes the Chaldeans of the mountains from their Carduchian neighbours. (*Anab.* iv. *Cyrop.* iii.) If we accept Strabo's identification of the Chalybes and Chaldæi, it only implies that the Semitic area extended

far north—which is in itself probable—(as the derivation of the Philistines from Crete, if we accept it, may imply the ebb-tide of a Semitic migration westward). Fierceness in conquering Shemites has, unhappily, nothing to surprise us; whereas if Nebuchadnezzar's father Belesis, the fellow-conspirator of Cyaxares against Nineveh, had been a pure Magian, we should be surprised to find so little stamp of his worship or his language on the genius of Babylon. If Nebuchadnezzar had been a Kurd, the entire development must have been different. Whatever nations may have marched under the Assyrian standard, it would be strange if the Jews, who distinguished the Elamite and the Mede, misplaced the name of a race bearing less remote affinity to themselves, by applying it to the rudest fragment of the Iranian race. Will any one seriously maintain, that Abraham was a Kurd? The more this conjecture of the Iranian origin of the Chaldees is investigated, the more it is found to rest on little beyond a possibility, or a suspicion, that the Semitic religions in their better phase may have contained a Medo-Persic, or Zoroastrian, element. Proof of this will hardly be found.

A third, a more recent, suggestion must be mentioned. The language of inscriptions found in the neighbourhood of Hillah, the supposed site of Babylon, is said to betray Hamite, or African, affinities, the words being Ethiopian. Hence it is argued, with the sanction, if I understand aright, of Sir H. Rawlinson, that the earliest Chaldees were African immigrants in Asia. Their wisdom would have roots derivable from Egypt instead of from Bactria. The advocates of this discovery do not appear to reflect that Semitic affinities extended along the north-eastern coast of Africa, where they are still represented by the Ghiz and Amharic languages, and in a diminishing degree by those of the Berbers and Gallas. Suppose the inscriptions of Babel decyphered, the decypherment treated more critically than seems yet to have been done; it may re-

main more natural to explain the Ethiopian resemblances by the graduation (which in extreme antiquity would be more perceptible) of Semitic into Libyan languages, than by settling a Cushite colony on the Euphrates, and supposing it to give religion and astronomy to the Asiatic kingdom in which it became absorbed. Grant that an Ethiopian wave (represented by Nimrod, as a precursor on a larger scale of the later Tirhakah), may have passed over primeval Babylon (for this may be an interpretation of Genesis x. 8—10), it left no deposit memorable enough for Berossus to record: if the indigenous *Chasdim* had sprung from it, the extension of their name to northern Mesopotamia and Armenia would only become more inexplicable; the sudden emergence of a Semitic Babylon under Nabo-polasar would not be less startling; the suggestions of Scripture, and the testimonies of a native historian (Josephus, *Antiq.* I. vi. and vii.), with all the probabilities of physical ethnography, would yield to a few possibly well decyphered, probably ill-used, etymologies. Whatever may be thought of the transfer of Ur, from the latitude of Edessa to the south of Babylon, I think the happiest result of the collision of the Iranian and African theories is to restore the Chaldeans to their natural and traditional place, as originally a pastoral clan, ultimately a sacerdotal caste, of that devout and intelligent race, whose northern cradle was between the two Rivers, who twice in Arabia kindled faith in the living God, and whose Biblical Patriarch is Shem.

It enlarges our conception of the capacity of the Semitic races, if we reflect, how many famous cities, Babylon possibly oldest of towns, Nineveh, the first seat of empire, Tyre, inventress of alphabets, civiliser of many shores, Carthage, the rival of Rome, Jerusalem, the nurse of priesthoods, though stepmother of Prophets, (Luke xiii. 33) sprung from their genius, and flourished or fell under their conduct. Yet a more chivalrous cast of

character, possibly a more creative type of genius, appears in the Iranian races, who (not to explore the dim antiquity of Berossus) first in historical daylight wrested empire from their elder brethren when Cyrus captured Babylon. As Esau was to Jacob, as the old Gauls and Goths were to the dark and sinewy populations of southern Europe, the Iberian, Silurian, and Italian, so must the Medes and Persians have been to the men of Nineveh and Babylon. Friendly, loyal, hospitable, living in large parks, skilful in horsemanship and archery, and speaking or professing to speak truth, as a point of honour, the Persians in their best stage leave an impression as the most "gentlemanly" nation of antiquity. Yet there is no reason to suppose the picture of their fierceness in conquest overcharged. The Medes were still rougher casts of the same type. For specimens of cold-blooded cruelty, our recollection would not turn so readily to the Indo-European children of Japetus, as to the Syro-Arabian sons of Shem; yet remembering the barbarity of Alexander to the defenders of Gaza and Tyre, one may falter in such a verdict, as the history of European diplomacy may suggest a doubt whether guile is Oriental. Verifications of this too protracted note may be found in 1 Adelung's *Mithridates*, by Vater, pp. 294-400; 1 Bochart, 51, 57, 183; Gesenius, *Thesaurus*, v. כשדים, and on Isaiah xxiii. 13; Rosenmüller on Habakkuk i. 6; Herodotus, i. and ii.; see the death of Cambyses, with the weeping of the Persian nobles, iii. 66; Strabo xvi. x. xi.; Grote, H. G. C. xix.; Prichard, *Nat. Hist. Man*, xvi. xvii. xxv. xxvii.; Manchester's *Times of Daniel*, pp. 102-127; Layard, ii. p. 237. Since this was written, Mr. Palgrave has started a Nabathean theory, but on highly conjectural grounds. 2 Arabia, ch. xiii.

XIII.

1. The ETERNAL of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely, as I have imagined, so shall it be, and as I have counselled, it shall stand ;

2. To break Assur in my land, and that on my mountains I will trample him ; so that his yoke depart from off them, and his burden remove from upon their shoulder.[1]

[1] *Their shoulder.* Hebr. his.

Chapter XIII contains three pieces, of which the first in place may be the latest in time, and the second in place probably the first in time.

Departing but slightly from the arrangement of the Anglican Version, I recommend the reader to compare verses 1—4 with the preceding chapters 10, 11, to which they seem to belong. He will then observe the appearance which the Burden upon Babel bears of being a later introduction, and if the former denunciations against Assyria belong to the 14th or 16th years of Hezekiah's reign, he will naturally ascribe these four verses to the same period. The next question is, when was Tartan at Ashdod? Though the chronology of king Sargon's reign, with his numerous expeditions, is hardly perhaps clear enough to justify anything positive (Comp. ii. Rawlinson's Ancient Monarchies, ch. ix. pp. 291—417), I follow those who place Ashdod's capture soon after Samaria's fall, B.C. 721 (or 709), and therefore fix it about the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign. It would result that the passage vv. 5—10 is chronologically the oldest, being fixed by the death of Ahaz. We get the woe upon Philistia, B.C. 728, the threatening of Egypt, 721, the denunciation of Assyria, 712. Those who fix the leading event, the fall of Samaria, in 709, instead of 721, will alter the corres-

3. This is the counsel that is counselled upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.

4. For when the ETERNAL[2] of hosts has taken counsel, who shall frustrate? when his hand is stretched out, who shall turn it back?

¶ 5. In the year of king Ahaz's dying, was this burthen,[3]

6. Rejoice not Philistia, all of thee, because the rod that smote thee is broken;

7. For out of the serpent's root comes forth a basilisk, and his fruit is a winged dragon;[4]

[2] *When the Eternal, &c., who shall, &c.* Hebr. The Eternal has counselled, and who shall, &c.

[3] *Burthen.* Hebr. Utterance.

[4] *Dragon, i.e.* a great serpent. Hebr. Seraph, a word of disputed origin and meaning; most obviously interpreted *burning*; a sense which suits the serpent's fang, the seraph's flame, the lightning's fire, and the poetical dragon's attributes; but, if of Iranian origin, the meaning may be *noble*, as of attendant princes.

ponding dates accordingly. The three pieces correspond sufficiently to fall into one group.

1—4. In this passage, which apparently belongs to ch. xi., where the reader may conceive it between verses 4, 5, or between verses 9, 10, Isaiah expresses a strong presentiment, that Jehovah, who has seen the Assyrian lifting up a rod of Egyptian bondage, and waving his hand against the temple of Zion, will lop the invader's arm, and trample him down on the hills of the Holy Land, which he has trodden.

5—10. When Ahaz died, B.C. 728, (or 715) his kingdom, weakened by sixteen years of inglorious reign, could cause little dread to the Philistines. They may have spoken tauntingly, or have remembered the warlike successes of his grandfather Uzziah, in whose death-year one MS. places this passage with more obvious appropri-

8. But the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy lie down in confidence; while I kill with hunger thy root, and *man* slays thy remnant.

9. Howl, Gate, cry, City: dissolved *art thou,* Philistia, all of thee; for out of the north comes a smoke, and no one strayeth in his array.[5]

10. But what shall *man* answer[6] the ambassadors of the nation? That the ETERNAL has founded Zion, and therein shall the poor of his people trust.

¶ 11. In the year of Tartan's coming to Ashdod, on

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[5] *Strayeth in his array;* or, tarrieth in his appointed times. Vulg. Non est qui effugiet agmen ejus. Joel ii. 7, 8.

[6] *Answer, &c.;* or, what shall the ambassadors answer? since there is no preposition; still it is better to take the verb impersonally, as in verse 8, and force it to govern ambassadors. So Vulg. Quid respondebitur nuntiis gentis. Nation may stand for nations.

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ateness. Isaiah might answer, Low as we are, we are still under the protection of Jehovah. If however we observe that Tiglath-Pileser, whether he were king, or acted as general for Sargon, disappears from history (2 Kings xvi. xvii), in the reign of Ahaz, and Shalmaneser appears early in Hezekiah's reign, though our decypherers may hardly guarantee an exact coincidence (Rawlinson makes Tiglath-Pileser die in 726), we find the suggestion of a more striking occasion. Each Assyrian invader threatened Philistia equally with Judea. The death of one great potentate might make the uncircumcised rejoice. The Prophet foresaw for them a fiercer fang out of the serpent's brood, yet trusted that round the city of peace a quiet and pastoral race might find refuge, and ambassadors seeking alliance or tribute, or messengers spying the nakedness of the land, would report the unshaken confidence of the city of Jehovah.

11—17. Here, alone in the Bible, (A. V. xx.) we find mention of king Sargon, whom the LXX. turn into Arnas,

Sargon king of Assyria's sending him, and he fought against Ashdod, and took it,

12. At that time spake the ETERNAL by the hand of Isaiah son of Amoz, saying, Go, loosen the sackcloth from off thy loins, and unbind thy shoe from off thy foot:

13. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot.

14. Then the ETERNAL spake, Even as my servant Isaiah walked naked and barefoot, three years,[7] a sign and a portent upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia,

[7] *Three years.* Hebrew editors punctuate these words into connexion with *a sign and a portent*, as if the Prophet had not walked for three years, but portended three years. Such a construction is less idiomatic, though suggested by a desire to lessen the strangeness of the act.

and Eusebius knew nothing of, but whom our Assyrian decypherers place at present between Shalmaneser and Sennacherib, making him a successful usurper, and assigning him a victorious career of 17 years (2 Rawlinson, Ass. Emp. ix. p. 291). Others prolong his reign (with, I think, less probability,) over the period occupied by Tiglath-Pileser and Shalmaneser, who in that case would be his generals. The ordinary reader would do well to notice the sequence of names and events, as to which the Hebrew and Assyrian accounts are tolerably agreed, and not embarrass himself over every date in rival chronologies. The narrative in Ewald's Geschichte, B. iii. pp. 320-348, remains infinitely more instructive than recent decypherments of inscriptions which barely guarantee the skeleton of the history. In the contests often recurring between Assyria and Egypt, the sympathies of the Prophets are for the most part with Assyria, until provoked by invasion of Judea they turn for aid to Ethiopia, and but rarely, nor without vehement internal struggle, to Egypt. Gladliest Isaiah would see the Holy City trust in the strength of her present God, and under his shield in-

15. So leads[8] the king of Assyria captives of Egypt and exiles of Ethiopia, lads and old men, naked and barefoot, with their loins stript, the nakedness of Egypt,

16. Then shall *men* be confounded and ashamed, for Ethiopia their trust, and for Egypt their glory.

[8] *Leads ;* or, shall lead. *Loins.* Hebr. seat.

voke neither combatant's friendship, but issue oracles of admonition upon passing events from time to time.

So, when Ashdod was occupied by Tartan (the word seems an official title, and becomes with the LXX. Tanathan) a general of Sargina or Sargon, the crisis suggested a lesson against alliance with Egypt. The Philistian city, inhabited largely by natives of Egypt, and expecting aid from them, fell. During the siege, or for a period described with perhaps proverbial vagueness (comp. Daniel ix. 27 ; Rev. xi. 11) as three years, Isaiah strips even the prophet's ruder mantle of sackcloth (such as Elijah and the Baptist wore), and exhibits himself in a shape typical of the stript captive. We need not press the word *naked,* more than when Cincinnatus ploughs naked, or Virgil bids the sower be naked. Still less should we follow profound Hebraists, Aben-ezra, Kimchi, and others, who explain away the action as a vision, or as a thing of words, and not a reality, either being estranged from the primitive wildness of the East, or not choosing to imagine so great a Prophet associated with it. If special reason compels us doubtfully to except Hosea, strangeness is no argument against the reality of such dramatic predictions by the Prophets. I say prediction, without having materials to decide, how far it outstepped the range of strong foreboding in a mind trustful, roused, and witnessing suggestive preliminaries. The issue could hardly be doubtful. The length of the dramatic action depended on the siege. The moral is such as the fervid piety, which disdains limits of circumstance, would draw,

17. And the dweller of this coast[9] shall say in that day, Behold, thus goes it with our trust, whereunto we fled for refuge, to deliver ourselves from before Assyria's king; then how shall escape we?

XIV.

The Burthen of Moab.

1. Surely in the night it was stormed, Moab's city[1] was laid waste; surely in the night it was stormed, Moab's fortress was laid waste.

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[9] *Coast.* Hebr. island. V. V. 11—17, are chap. xx. of A. V.

[1] *Moab's city and fortress.* Hebr. Ar-Moab, and Kir-Moab. *Laid waste,* or made dumb.

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as in the case of a Puritan, or early Quaker, from disaster which had marked an irreligious policy. The lesson of Christ seems rather, that we should not be over anxious about the results of policy, not that it must fail of its earthly reward.

1. The chapter upon Moab, which the common arrangement unhappily divides in the midst of a sentiment, if not of a sentence, becomes clearer, when read as a whole. It is chiefly important, as an exemplification of the practice of the Prophets in borrowing or adopting largely from each other. Not only the style has an archaic rudeness, unlike Isaiah, though this might be properly urged, but the last verse of the chapter expressly declares that the bulk of the chapter had been spoken of old. Whether, as is guessed, the former destruction had come upon Moab from the warlike Jeroboam, Joash's son, (2 Kings xiv. 25), and whether, as against probability is suggested, Jonah son of Amittai, an Ephraimite prophet, then counselled recourse for refuge to Zion, or whether it is but laborious trifling to prefer one of many possibilities upon conjecture, the purport of the chapter is clear. Moab, a fat, well-pastured, people, lying east of the Dead

2. Baith[2] is gone up, and Dibon, to the high places to weep; over Nebo and over Medba Moab howls; on all his heads is baldness, and every beard is shorn.

[2] *Baith.* See Jer. xlviii. 22. Beith Diblathaim; compared by some (as Thor-ha-batha), with the Θαραβασά of Josephus, A. J. xiv. 1, 4. By Jerome taken wrongly as Domus Regia, the King's House.

Sea and Jordan, from Zoar as far as north as the Arnon, and at times farther north, had suffered fire and sword. Its cities Heshbon, Kir, Ar, Elealeh, Eglaim, were some smitten, some drowned in tears, as they watched the ruin. A Jewish prophet (for the counsel hardly suits an Ephraimite) feels a kindly compassion for the kindred people, and advises payment to Judah of the sheep-tribute (2 Kings iii. 4), which king Mesha had paid to Israel but withdrawn. As the Moabites shew little signs of accepting the advice, the Prophet anticipates for them farther calamity.

How far, besides patriotic feeling, this presentiment breathes a right sense of the Divine judgments in the world, depends upon several things on which our information is not perfect. If the Moabites were more sensually idolatrous, vicious, and as we in self-laudatory antithesis say, "heathenish," than the people of Judah, their calamity would be a judgment, and their monitor not only a poet, but a prophet of God. We ought not, however, from distress to infer guilt (St. Luke xiii. 3), and one of the most fatal snares of the Biblical expositor is thus to reproach the fallen, by assuming that the Galileans on whom the tower fell were worse than others; that Moab was more vicious than Ephraim, Ephraim than Judah; or Judah when she fell worse than under Solomon; or at all times worse than any analogous country or institution now.

At all events, Isaiah finding the elder Prophet's dirge over Moab (which in its tone of hearty simplicity resembles the wail of the British Lamorac over towns burnt

3. In their streets they have girded on sackcloth; on her roofs and in her highways every one howls, down-pouring in weeping.

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by invaders) adapts it again to his own time. If it has not been fulfilled yet, in three years it will be. Why in three years? We have seen that in ch. xiii. an Assyrian invasion was expected, or a siege lasted during three years; and the number three was familiarly proverbial, as in the phrase תְּמוֹל שִׁלְשֹׁם, *yesterday or the day before*, as in Hosea's third day. (Hosea v. 3.) Why do we call it a presentiment half patriotic, half religious, and not rather an oracle dictated expressly by Almighty God, unlike our vague presentiments and forebodings? I answer, because the passage is repeated again by Jeremiah (ch. xlviii.) a hundred years after Isaiah had adopted it from some older Prophet still. This repetition would have been needless, or impossible, if it had been an oracle fulfilled in three years. Rather it is a description of a ruin before the eldest poet's eye; a ruin, which he saw with sympathy, interpreted by religious faith, endeavoured to turn to patriotic ends, and of which we may conceive his interpretation to contain a certain emotional truth; not an unmixed transcript of the Divine mind, but a reading of it through the clouds of events, the mist of passions, and tears of blood, which disturb, without blinding the eye of faith.

The places, commencing with the central Ar, or Rabbah, of Moab (Greek Areopolis), and Kir somewhat southward, range from Jazer in the north, Heshbon, Meidaba, and the heights of Nebo, to the torrent Dimon, and the town Zoar, on the extreme south, but their topography adds nothing to the sentiment, except for local antiquarians. The 32nd of Numbers mentions most of them, and subsequently Peræa displays them from the brook Jabbok and Mount Gilead across the Arnon southwards.

4. So Heshbon cried aloud, and Elealeh; their voice was heard as far as Jahaz; therefore the armed soldiers of Moab groan; his life has become grievous to him.

5. My heart crieth out for Moab, her fugitives *are* as far as Zoar, *as* a heifer[3] of three years old; for at the ascent of Luhith with weeping they ascend by it; for by the way of Horonaim they raise a cry of ruin.

6. For the waters of Nimrim are desolate; for the herb is withered, the grass is faded, there is no green thing.

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[3] *As a heifer of three years old*; or, *Eglath-shelishiyah*, the name of a place, like Eglaim, as is thought, but doubtfully, on Jer. xlviii. 24. One may suspect the reading to have varied; and to have meant a heifer loosened. עֶגְלַת שְׁלִשִׁיָּה.

We may read in the 21st and 32nd of Numbers how the dispossession of the Moabites by the Amorites gave occasion for traditional songs suggestive of the composite character of the Mosaic books, and how it was followed by the Hebrew conquest for the benefit of the tribes of Reuben and Gad. These again suffered the ebb and flow of hostilities repeated throughout generations. Comp. 2 Sam. xii. and xxiv. 5; 1 Kings xxii.; 2 Kings i. and iii. 4—27.

1—3. Because Ar and Kir had been stormed at night, and laid silent or desolate, therefore the men of Baith, or of the palace, go up to mourn before their gods. Such is one rendering, and a good one, of the passage. Still it may be better to take the word כִּי as Surely: to join night with the verb of storming, and to understand by laid waste the completeness of desolation; not to introduce into this most rugged writer a balance of cause and effect. He breaks out with a groan, as he sees the mourners, hears the shriek from town to town, imagines the fugitives like a heifer astray.

4—7. Jahaz in the north, the steep ascent of Luhith

7. Therefore the abundance he had gotten and their substance, they carry away to the river of the deserts.[4]

8. For the cry has run round the border of Moab; its howling *is* to Eglaim, and its howling to Beer-Elim.[5]

9. For the waters of Blood-stream [*Dimon*] are full of blood; for I bring more upon Blood-stream, lions upon the escaping of Moab, and on the remnant of the land.

10. Send lambs thou ruler of the land,[6] from Petra of the wilderness, to the mount of Zion's daughter.

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[4] *River of the deserts;* or, river of the willows; or, less probably, of the Arabs. Probably *Wadi-el-Ahsa,* (Vandervelt, *el-Asi,*) which under the name of *W. el-Safieh,* flows into the S. E. of the Dead Sea. With this may be identified the river of Amos v. 14, (vi. 14); in which case *Arabah* in Amos, and perhaps the plural here, would mean the Hollow, or Vale. So Maurer and Pusey; but not Gesenius. Comp. Robinson, *Phys. G.* p. 67; *Researches,* ii. 600.

[5] *Beer-elim,* the well dug by the princes of Israel, Numbers xxi. 18; hence, the well of the Mighty, a most satisfactory proof (if proof needed be) that the Hebrew EL, אֵל, does not necessarily convey the sense of Deity.

[6] *Send lambs, &c.;* or, more literally, Send the lamb—(*tribute*) of the ruler of the land from Selah (*Petra*) towards the wilderness to the mount of Zion's daughter, *i.e.* Divert to Zion the lambs which have been paid to Edom. But why towards the wilderness, I find no good explanation; since to Edom would be more so. The sense comes to the same. But Jerome's *Emitte Agnum dominatorem* is not defensible; nor the LXX. ἐρπετὰ, nor the false reading of *Bar,* Son.

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in the west, the torrent of willows, or of the Hollow in the south, suggest flight or refuge.

9, 10. These verses are connected in sense, and may once have been so in construction. Since God sends lions (the constant image for foes) to rend Moab, the Prophet advises refuge to be sought with the lion of Judah, and the old tribute of lambs to be revived. Whether that tribute had been diverted to Edom, as we may well think, or whether Petra was but a mart for Moabite exiles to purchase, (which is farther-fetched,) let the tribute come to Zion, and the Prophet will counsel the daughter of his

11. So it shall be, *when* as a wandering bird, cast forth from the nest, the daughters of Moab are at the fords of Arnon,

12. *I will say,* Take counsel, execute judgment, make thy shadow as night in the midst of noontide; hide the outcasts, uncover not the wanderer; let the outcasts of Moab[7] dwell with thee; be thou a covert to them from the face of the destroyer.

13. Surely the oppressor is come to an end; destruction ceaseth, the tramplers are consumed out of the land,

14. And in mercy is established a throne, and in faithfulness one abideth upon it, judging in the tent of David,[8] and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness.

15. We have heard Moab's pride, proud exceedingly;

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[7] *Outcasts of Moab;* or, as the text is punctuated, *My outcasts, Moab.* But Moab is hardly the speaker, still less the object of address. Zion is rather counselled by the Prophet to receive the fugitives of Moab. So Lowth and Ewald, rightly following the LXX. οἱ φυγάδες Μωάβ, though Jerome's *profugi mei, Moab,* shews how early the Jews understood it differently.

[8] *Judging in the tent of David;* or, as punctuated, abides in the tent of David, judging and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness. It is more a feeling than a certainty, but the rhythm seems to me against the Masoretic punctuation.

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people to shelter the fugitives. The style rises here out of the rugged fragment into Isaiah's flow; and we may suppose some attempt in Hezekiah's early reign to organise a Palestinian league, with Jerusalem at its head, to be not dimly shadowed forth to us.

11. The phrase, *And it shall be,* is conditional. Suppose a tribute and a league, then, when Moab's daughters flutter as outcasts, there will be refuge under David's throne. The strong hand of Hezekiah, trusting in the God of justice, will bring Assyrian, or other, invasion to end.

15. The proud rejection by Moab of either Judah's

his haughtiness and his pride and his wrath; his feignings[9] that come not to pass.

16. Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab; he shall howl altogether; for the men of might of Kir-hareseth you shall moan; they are utterly smitten.

17. For the fields of Heshbon languish; the vine of Sibmah, the lords of the nations have broken[1] her choice suckers, that reached to Jahzer and strayed through the wilderness; whose branches extended themselves, *and* passed over the sea.

18. Therefore let me weep in Jahzer's weeping for the

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[9] *Feignings that come not to pass;* or, his counsellors, (*lit.* liars,) are not upright.

[1] *The lords of the nations have broken;* or, which the lords of the nations plucked, *i.e.* prized highly. One rendering dwells on the now desolation; the other on the previous value; or, as many quite possibly take it, whose branches smote down, *i.e.* prostrated with wine, the lords of the nations. (*Cf.* Heb. Isaiah xxviii. 1.)

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offers, or Isaiah's counsels, lays her open to the invader, who sweeps all these countries.

16. Kir-hareseth; generally, any fabric, as of brick, tiles, wood, and so taken by Jerome, "*his qui lætantur super muros cocti lateris, loquimini plagas eis;*" but in Moab a town, rather several towns as our maps represent, with the same, or slightly-differing names. It may be the same as Kir-hares below, ver. 20, but if rightly identified with the great Caer, or fort, of verse 1, would be the modern Kerak, south-east of the Dead Sea. The Greek name Χαράκμωβα, found in Stephanus, de Urb. is rightly compared with it.

17—20. As the men of Jahzer wept over the tidings of the desolated vineyards of Sibmah, so the Prophet joins his tears.

vine of Sibmah ;[2] let me water thee with my tears, Heshbon and Elealeh.

19. For the shouting over thy summer fruits and thy autumn fruits is fallen; and gladness is removed and exulting out of the choice field ;[3] and in the vineyards is neither singing nor jubilation ; the trampler tramples not wine in the wine vats ; I have made shouting cease.

20. Therefore my bowels mourn like a harp over Moab, and my inward being over Kir-haresh.

21. And it shall be, when it is seen that Moab is grown faint on the high place, he shall come to His sanctuary to make supplication ; but he shall not prevail.[4]

22. This is the word which the ETERNAL spake to Moab from of old ; but now the ETERNAL has spoken, saying,

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[2] *The vine of Sibmah.* "Propagines, populum fugitivosque intellige ; et transitum maris captivitatem in Babylonem.—Vox plangentis vineam .... urbes quondam validissimas, Assyrio putante, succisas. Calcatores uvarum hostium exercitum intellige." *Hieron.* in l. So Jerome characteristically. But the evident circumstance that a nation is often imaged as a vine (as in Isaiah v.) by no means proves that the Prophet can never mention a vine or vineyard, without meaning thereby a nation. Probably the description here is literal. Still less can Jerome's farther mystical explanation be received, that Jahzer means the strength of heretics, and the vine of Sibmah science exalting herself against the knowledge of God.

[3] *Choice field.* Heb. Carmel. "Idioma scripturarum est, quod semper Carmelum montem opimum et nemorosum, qui Ptolemaidi imminet, et in quo oravit Elias, fertilitati et abundantiæ comparet; ac per hoc significat omnem lætitiam ..... auferendam." *Hier.* in l. Again, mystically, *Carmel* is made to mean that spiritual vision of truth (of which Judaic rites were signs, and) which Jerome says heretics falsely boasted.

[4] *He shall not prevail.* Instead of treating these words, as the echoing clause to the preceding, as our present text compels, Ewald makes them part of the first clause, and imagines a rhythmical response out of Jer. xlviii. 13.

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21. In this verse is either the last of the fragment, or a trace of Isaiah's adaptation.

22. As Jehovah hired the Assyrian from beyond the

Within three years, as the years of one that is hired, then shall the glory of Moab be humbled, with all that great multitude; and the remnant shall be little and small, not mighty.

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river (see vii. 14, v. 26) to overrun Syria and Samaria, and as within two years of a child's infant life that task of destruction was accomplished, so Ashdod's siege had perhaps been completed within three years; so here the Prophet forebodes that three years will suffice for the sweep of invasion to include Moab, which would not have alliance with Judah.

Such seems the natural sense of this chapter, which admits less than usual of spiritual adaptation, in a mystical sense, though it may bear a moral, as well as patriotic, rendering from those who can prove the moral standard of Jerusalem higher than that of Kir.

I have said little of Jerome's wilder perversions: one of the most painful is in verse 10 (xvi. 1), "*Egredietur de te Agnus immaculatus, qui tollet peccata Mundi.*" This is so far adopted in the Anglican Version's heading, that it runs, "Moab is exhorted to yield obedience to Christ's "kingdom." Any reader who is serious enough to ascertain Isaiah's meaning, may ask, if a Church is justified in so representing it for simple people; or if rulers have a right, as followers of Christ, in whose mouth no guile was found, to feign perfidious accusations against one, who, having no heretical object, desires, with Calvin, the true and certain intelligence of Scripture to remain.

The true interpreter's 'heresy' at worst comes upon him as an undesired necessity; often is no more in his thought than in his desire; sometimes was not even supposed, but feigned by unholy policy.

XV.

The Burden[5] *of Damascus.*

1. Behold, Damascus is removed from *being* a city, and is become a ruinous heap.

2. The cities of Aroer[6] are forsaken; they are become a place for flocks, which lie down, and no man startles them.

3. And fortress is ceased from Ephraim, and kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Aram;[7] they shall be as the glory of the sons of Israel, is the saying of the ETERNAL of hosts;

4. And it shall be in that day, the glory of Jacob shall be thin, and the fatness of his flesh become lean;

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[5] *Burden.* Hebr. Utterance, from v. *Nasa*, to lift up, as the Divine name or life in an oath; the voice in speech; a parable or song in utterance; the countenance of a supplicant; the imputation of sinfulness from an offender repenting.

[6] *Aroer.* Either the two northernmost cities of this name in the Jabbok and Arnon region, denote the land of the east Jordan tribes, Reuben and Gad, laid waste with Syria by Tiglath-Pileser, 745-738: or there is a play on the words עִיר *city*, and עֲרֻעָר *stript*, as it were, the cities of nakedness=the soil of desolation.

[7] *Remnant of Aram, i.e.* Syria; or, the remnant of Aram shall be as the glory of the sons of Israel, *i.e.* Syria shall fall as low as Ephraim.

1—4. We have seen in chapters vii. viii. ix. denounced or described, the Assyrian invasions by which Ephraim was half dispeopled, its reviving strength in alliance with Syria humbled, and Damascus captured, B.C. 745-738. In this 15th chapter, Isaiah, or one of his school, returns to the subject, with less of vigour than before, but with a repetition of like images, less nervously compacted, perhaps dislocated by time. Here Damascus has already fallen. The cities are stript naked. Aroer, the Reubenite town east of Jordan (if this be not rather a common name for ruined

5. And it shall be as in the harvester's gathering the standing corn, when he harvests the ears in his arm; yea, it shall be like one gathering ears in the valley of Rephaim,[8]

6. And there shall be left therein gleanings, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the summit of the topmost branch, four or five in her cleft branches, *wherewith she was* fruitful,[9] is the saying of the ETERNAL, the God of Israel.

7. In that day shall Man look to his Maker, and his eyes have regard to the Holy One of Israel; and shall not look to the altars the work of his hands, neither regard that which his fingers fashioned,

8. But the Moon-statues,[1] and the Sun-statues, the

[8] *Rephaim*; or, the silent; an extinct race, anterior to the Hebrews; here as a name for the fertile vale S. W. of Jerusalem, but possibly with a meaning of pregnancy; the nations reaped by the Divine sickle falling as in the valley of the Dead. Robinson, *Res.* iii. p. 156.

[9] *Wherewith she was fruitful*, of her the fruitful one.

[1] *Moon-statues.* Hebr. Ashērim, Astartes: Gr. ἄλση, δένδρα, whence A. V. Groves; but see 2 Kings xxiii. 4—6. These words are usually pointed into the preceding verse. The text seems to need a stronger remedy than one can venture.

forts) shares the fall of Damascus. After description of the event, the Prophet glides as usual into a divination of its causes; and entering with the genius of inspiration the council-chamber of the Almighty, paints the speech of Him whose words are events, forecasting the result.

5, 6. When the nations are ripe for destruction, the avenging sickle of God reaps them. As harvests strew the plain from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, so the haughty confederates, who boasted of Retzin and Pekach, sink into the dim oblivion of extinct races, the Rephaim who were long ago. The remnant is as a gleaning.

7, 8. From art to religion, from idolatry and symbol-

cities of his strength, in that day shall be as that which is left of the forest and of the topmost bough; *as the cities* which they left from before the face of the sons of Israel.

9. And *thou* shalt be[2] a desolation, because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and not remembered the Rock of thy strength:

10. Therefore shalt thou plant very pleasant[3] plants, and for stranger's lopping[4] shalt thou sow it; in the day of thy planting shalt thou fence,[5] and in the morning when thou bringest thy seed to bloom, the harvest is fled,[6] in a day of sickness, and of desperate sorrow.

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[2] *And thou shalt be.* More literally, Hebr. there shall be; but the Vulgate, *et eris deserta*, suggests reading the second person, as suits the context following.

[3] *Very pleasant.* The Vulgate, *plantationem fidelem*, mistook the word.

[4] *A stranger's lopping;* or, foreign shrubs, as interpreters generally. Vulg. Germen alienum; Gr. σπέρμα ἄπιστον.

[5] *Fence*, so the Hebrew, but learned Jews, misled by the Aramaic, render make great=nourish.

[6] *Harvest is fled;* or, a heap of harvest. *A day of sickness;* or, the day of inheritance. *Desperate sorrow;* or, as a father sickening; Gr. ᾗ ἂν ἡμέρᾳ κληρώσῃ, καὶ ὡς πατὴρ ἀνθρώπου κληρώσῃ.

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ism to a deeper cry of heart on Him who is alone the Eternal Helper, men turned then, would turn now, in the calamitous hour.

Astarte, Queen of Heaven, and flaming orb of sun, or images of both, painted by priestcraft as cities of strength, are helpless, as the gleanings of field and forest, as the old cities of the Canaanite and his idols.

9, 10. Either desolation ensues; or the Prophet, turning to the daughter of Aram and Ephraim, denounces doom. In this chapter I feel compelled to take more than usual freedom in disentangling difficulties.

The pleasant plantations, exotic shrubs, and all the

11. Ho,[7] to the multitude of mighty races, which roar like the roaring of the seas; and to the swell of populations which are swollen like the swell of mighty waters.

12. The populations like the swell of mighty waters are swollen; and rebuke shall be upon him, and he shall flee from afar, and be pursued as chaff of the mountains before the wind, and as dust of straw before a whirlwind at eventide,[8] and behold confusion; before the morning he is no more.

13. This is the portion of our spoilers, and the lot of our plunderers.

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[7] *Ho;* or, woe.

[8] *A whirlwind at eventide;* or, we may stop at whirlwind, and follow A. V. in making a sharp antithesis between the evening and morning; so Rabbinical editors, but the position of the conjunction is against it

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hopes of luxury discounting its morrow perish in blank, or bear fruit of grief. Comp. Amos v.

11—13. All critics, or nearly all, make these closing verses a separate prophecy. There is no necessity against connecting them with what has gone before. God utters his voice, a mysterious impulse of Providence for the philosopher, a sound as of supernatural trumpet in the rapt hearing of the Prophet, and mighty races obey from afar, Assyrian of old, Russ or Tartar now, and their hordes become a rebuke to the petty tyrant, the invader from Syria or Samaria, or the Affghan intriguer.

Too Judaically, far too naturally, the grim patriot traces in the invasion a retribution for the wrongs done to his own land. If in a way even our wrath praises God, and our sense of wrong justly interprets strokes of destiny, such incense is not dearest to Him, nor happiest for ourselves.

XVI.

1. Ho! Land shadowing[1] with wings, which art from the border of Ethiopia's rivers, which sendest ambassadors by the sea, and in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters;

[1] *Shadowing;* or, sounding, as with a tinkling.

1—7. It is much disputed whether the first seven verses of this chapter should be connected with the three closing verses of the preceding, or with the following burden upon Egypt; or again, if they should stand alone, as a distinct prophecy. In favour of connexion with the preceding is the use of the outcry Ho, and the most eminent critics follow this. According to the view here adopted, the last chapter all referred to the downfall of Syria and Ephraim; Ethiopia is introduced as a new subject in the first seven verses here; and I leave undecided whether the subsequent burthen upon Egypt was connected by Isaiah himself with the piece on Ethiopia, or so appended by the arrangement of ancient editors. There is no difficulty in conceiving a loose connexion between the Ethiopian, Egyptian, and subsequent pieces, such as might suggest to an editor our existing arrangement, though the Prophet may have written them at different times.

We may with reasonable certainty place the Ethiopian piece in the time when Tirhakah, or Taracos, still exercising an influence, though no longer a domination, in Egypt, threatened Sennacherib with an expedition, which made the Assyrian retreat (2 Kings xix. 7, 9, 36), and may have been accompanied by embassy, had at least the effect of friendliness, to Judah. We have not absolute evidence whether the disaster to Sennacherib's host, described by Herodotus, ii. 141, be the same as that described in 2 Kings xix.; nor, supposing it the same, do we know whether it happened in Egypt or in Pales-

2. Go, swift messengers, to a nation *far* extended and headlong,[2] to a people terrible from its place, and beyond,[3] a people of stammering[4] and of trampling, whose land the rivers spoil,[5]

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[2] *Headlong;* or, polished of skin. If this be the sense, the word extended should be understood of stature, or length of days; neither probable.

From its place, and beyond; or, of time, instead of place.

[4] *Stammering;* or, of measuring out land by line, as it were geometers; but see below, c. xxiv. v. 10, and notes.

Spoil; or, intersect.

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tine, since the accounts point different ways. Probability seems in favour of identification. There is nothing unreasonable then in proceeding to understand the troubles of Egypt under Sethos, in the days of Taracos and Sennacherib as described with ideal magnification, or judicially denounced, by Isaiah in vv. 4—16; but it must be admitted that most critics refer the passage forward to the troubles of the *Twelve-principalities* immediately preceding Psammetichus. No evidence leads them to do this, but an assumption that whatever the Prophets describe as the result of the Divine counsel must have been at the time future; though, if it were present, or even past, the Prophet might no less fitly go back in unravelling its causation to the Divine thought as its origin. The difference of time between the two periods to which the Egypt piece is referred, would be about thirty years, B.C. 713—685 or 683.

The subsequent passage describing five Hebrew cities in Egypt (A. V. xix. 18—25) here arranged as ch. xvii. refers to a settlement in Egypt a century later, in the days of Nebuchadnezzar and Jeremiah, and may probably, if not certainly, have been then added to Isaiah's writings.

1, 2. Isaiah having heard of Tirhakah's promising to protect Egypt from Sennacherib, and seeing, perhaps,

3. All inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, as on the lifting up a standard on the mountains, behold; and as at the blowing of a trumpet, hearken;

4. For thus spake the ETERNAL to me, Let me rest and contemplate in my dwelling place, like a clear heat upon dawn,[6] like a dewy cloud in the heat of the vintage;

5. For before the vintage, when the bud is perfect, and when the flower is become ripening grapes, man shall cut off the sprigs with pruning-hooks, and remove with lopping the branches;

6. They shall be left together to the wild bird of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth; and upon them shall the wild bird summer, and every beast of the earth winter upon them;

7. In that time shall be brought a present unto the

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[6] *Dawn;* or rain. Or herbs.

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ambassadors, tall, slim, and polished of skin, or bringing boastful description of their master's territory and rapid march, is ready to accept the alliance of Ethiopia.

3, 4. Yet, in accepting it, the Prophet would not lower his nation to a suppliant style, but bids the messengers carry back tidings of Jehovah as the grand Saviour and avenger, though resting as in noontide heat, but having in store refreshment.

5—7. The reaping of God shall nevertheless come. He who said by Joel, *Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe,* and who called Attila his flail, might well use Tirhakah, if he would, or Sennacherib, as it might be. So Isaiah contemplates, as he neither disdains the alliance, nor suffers it in his thought to take the place of God.

7. That Morians' land (Psalm lxviii. 31,) which offers

ETERNAL of hosts, [*from*] a people far extended[7] and headlong,[8] and from a people terrible from its place and beyond,[9] a nation of stammering[1] and of trampling down, whose land the rivers spoil,[2] to the place of the name of the ETERNAL of hosts, the mountain of Zion.

The Burden upon Egypt.

8. Behold the ETERNAL riding upon a swift cloud, and coming into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt tremble away before him, and the heart of Egypt melts in the midst thereof.

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[7] *Extended;* or tall, or long-lived. A prep. *from*, seems lost in the Hebrew.
[8] *Headlong;* or, of polished skin.
[9] *Its place and beyond;* or, its beginning and for ever.
[1] *Stammering;* or, of measuring by line, or of great strength; but see below, xxiv. 10, 11.
[2] *Spoil;* or, intersect.

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protection, may be glad to be protected herself by Jehovah, the God of Zion and of Eternity.

8. Alas! that I must tell men, that this verse does not mean, as the interpreters reported by Jerome imagined, the Son of God "coming upon a human body, which he "had assumed from the Virgin," *nullo humanæ commixtionis semine prægravatum*, but it means that which with rapt Poet's eye the Prophet saw behind the clouds of all human events, the Divine counsel ordering all, which counsel he again embodies in a shapeful figure of One riding as upon a cloud. As even the priestly fire grew in imagination into a Divine tabernacling or presence in the temple, and as all captured temples were fancied to be either deserted by nobler Deities or to give weaker ones into captivity; or as even in England, and still more in Italy, the ignorant or superstitious feign God present in the

9. Yea, I arm[3] Egypt in mail against Egypt, so that they fight each with his brother, and every one with his neighbour, city against city, kingdom against kingdom,

10. And the spirit of Egypt is emptied out of the midst thereof, and I destroy its counsel;[4] though they seek[5] to idols and to sooth-sayers, and to ghost-seers, and to conjurers,

11. Yea, I enclose the Egyptians in the hand of a cruel lordling,[6] and a fierce king shall rule over them, is the saying of the LORD, the ETERNAL of hosts.

12. And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up.

13. And the rivers *that* have become shallow[7] shall stink; and the water-courses of Egypt shall be dry; reeds and sedge are withered.

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[3] *Arm in mail;* or, stir up in confusion.

[4] See above, viii. 13.

[5] *Though they seek;* or, And, &c.

[6] *Enclose in the hand;* or, subject to the power. *Lordling.* Hebr. lords.

[7] The verb *become shallow*, may be pointed into the following clause; the watercourses have become shallow.

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form of bread, or his ineffable Spirit emergent from water, so in Poetry even lofty thinkers may paint idols, or false imaginations, vanishing before the face of All-enlightening Deity; and so Isaiah here; but we must not carnalise such things.

9. The first effect of Divine Malediction and the forerunner of Ruin is Discord.

11—15. Isaiah may have expected Tirhakah or Sennacherib to conquer Egypt; or uttered a general anticipation, afterwards verified by Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 600, and by Cambyses, B.C. 525.

The glory of Egypt and the Nile are as one. The ruin

14. The gardens[8] on the river, on the mouth of the river, and every seed plot of the river, shall wither *until they* perish, *and* be no more.

15. The fishermen also mourn, and all they that cast angle into the river lament, and the spreaders of nets on the face of the waters languish,

16. And confounded are the workers of combed flax, and the weavers of cotton,

17. And her pillars are broken, all workers for hire are sick of soul ;[9]

18. Yea, the princes of Zoan are foolish, the wisest of Pharaoh's counsellors, their counsel is become dumb.

19. How say ye unto Pharaoh, I am a son of the wise, a son of the kings of old ?[1]

20. Where now are thy wise men ? then let them proclaim to thee, and let *men* understand, what the ETERNAL of hosts has counselled upon Egypt.

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[8] *Gardens ;* or, papyrus. Vulg. *Calamus et juncus marcescet ; nudabitur alveus rivi a fonte suo.*

[9] *Sick of soul ;* or, ponds for live fish. Vulg. *qui faciebant lacunas ad capiendos pisces.*

[1] *Kings of old ;* or, of the East. Comp. 1 Kings iv. 30.

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of the kingdom affects the river. The river which gives plenty, first feels and inflicts death.

16. The fine linen, which even in patriarchal times attested a civilisation beyond our chronology, suffers, and its makers are perplexed.

17. Pillars, either the foundations of prosperity; or the mighty who are supporters, (as in Gr. and Latin,) or, (as some much less probably,) the poor.

18—23. What can come of judgment on the old sensual realm, but infatuation, even of the wisdom famous as that

21. The princes of Zoan are become foolish, the princes of Noph have deceived themselves; *they that are* the corner-stone of her tribes have led Egypt astray.

22. The ETERNAL has mingled in her midst a spirit of dizziness; and they have led Egypt astray in all his doings, like the staggering of a drunkard in his vomit,

23. And there is not for Egypt work which head or tail can do, palm-branch or reed.

24. In that day shall Egypt be like women, and shall tremble and quake before the shaking of the hand of JEHOVAH of hosts, which He shakes over it,

25. And the land of Judah shall be to Egypt a terror; every one that remembers it shall flutter thereunto,[2] because of the counsel of JEHOVAH of hosts, which he counsels over it.

XVII.

1. In that day shall be five cities in the land of Egypt, speaking the language of Canaan, and making oath by

[2] *Flutter thereunto.* As in Hosea x. 10, 11. So, I think; but it may be taken also, shall tremble over it, be afraid on account of it.

of Chaldæa, farthest India, or antiquity? The priestly caste deludes others. Noph is Memphis.

24, 25. With these two verses commences a change of tone, which becomes more marked in chap. xvii. 1, and suggests, if it does not prove, a later origin for chap. xvii.

1, 2. From Abraham to Moses, and from Solomon to the last Jewish king Zedekiah, intercourse between Palestine and Egypt is constantly implied. That influx of Jews which made them a strong and often troublesome element in the population of Egyptian cities is first remarkable

JEHOVAH of hosts; a city of deliverance[3] shall one of them be styled;

2. In that day shall be an altar to JEHOVAH in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar by her border's side to JEHOVAH,

[3] *A city of deliverance;* or, of destruction; or, of the sun; according as we read *Heres*, which has authority; or, *Cheres*, which is best; or, take it as a proper name, for Heliopolis, On, or Bethshemesh, which is least likely to have been meant by Isaiah, though possibly adopted in Jeremiah's time. Comp. Jer. xliii. 8—13; xliv. 15—28. So Vulg. Civitas Solis; but LXX. Ἀσεδὲκ, a city of righteousness; this doubtless an Egyptian corruption.

about a century after Isaiah's time, when Jeremiah and other exiles took refuge in Egypt. The same process is repeated on a larger scale in the time of the Ptolemies, especially marked in the younger Onias, who built under P. Philometor a temple at Leontopolis, (*Tel Ioudieh*) for which he claimed sanction from Isaiah, Jos. A. J. xiii. 3; B. J. vii. 10. *in fine*. What the author probably meant, was that one of the five cities peopled by his countrymen, should be a place of refuge. It was easy for others to turn the word into a name, as if it were On or Bethshemesh. When the Jews of Egypt and Palestine disputed, whether the schismatic temple could be justified, the first took a favourable reading, perhaps preserved it; the second chose a condemnatory one, perhaps inserted it; and if not *Cheres* and *Heres*, at least the reading *Cherem*, denunciation, and the Version *Asedec*, (*i.e.* righteousness,) are tinged by polemical influences.

When was the whole passage written? Those who consider it a genuine appendage to the preceding, still think it one of Isaiah's latest, and rejoice in the spirit of charity with which the great Prophet closes his career. Without professing reasons which would disprove Isaiah's authorship, I agree with those who see signs of distinctness from what has gone before, and think the passage pro-

3. That it may be a sign and a witness to JEHOVAH of hosts in the land of Egypt; when they shall cry to JEHOVAH because of oppressors, that he may send to them a saviour and a mighty one,[4] to deliver them;

4. And that JEHOVAH may be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians know JEHOVAH in that day, and serve *with* sacrifice and oblation, and that they may vow a vow to JEHOVAH, and perform it.

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[4] *A mighty one*; or a Pleader, a champion, from רִיב, to strive.

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bably, though not demonstrably, written in Jeremiah's time, when the works of the Prophets were far too incomplete and unarranged, for such an addition to startle anybody. Onias, B.C. 175—149, would find it part of the established text.

2, 3. I understand the passage as conveying the pious and friendly hopes of Jewish refugees for the prosperity of their benefactors. Those who attempt to fix on a definite saviour, select generally Psammetichus, as the restorer of national unity, though he is also considered by some the "hard lord."

4—8. It would be strange, if the Jews could settle in many Egyptian cities, and read the denunciations of the old Prophets against their hosts, without conceiving some gentler message where they were treated kindly. The intellectual life of the nation was yet strong enough in Jeremiah's time, for a fresh impulse, as from the breath of God, to create new language; hence our Prophet needed not, as Josephus, to express vile flattery by diverting old Hebrew sayings of blessing and hope to Vespasian and Titus; nor, as most of the Rabbinical scholars of the middle ages, to force by an unreal, and not even genuinely mystical interpretation, Edom or Egypt into modern empires or countries. Rather he still trusted God, and

5. So shall JEHOVAH smite Egypt in smiting, yet with healing, and they shall return to JEHOVAH, and he shall be propitious to them, and heal them.

6. In that day shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and Assyrian shall enter into Egypt, and Egyptian into Assyria, and Egypt shall worship with Assyria.[5]

7. In that day shall Israel be a third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth,

8. Whom JEHOVAH of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria my handiwork, and my inheritance Israel.

[*The piece known in the usual Text as Chap.* 20, *will have been found by the reader above in Chap.* 13.]

XVIII.

The Burden[6] *of the Wilderness of the Sea,* [*or, of the West.*]

1. As whirlwinds in the south on the rush, it comes from the wilderness, from a terrible land.

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[5] *Worship with Assyria;* or shall serve the Assyrian.

[6] *Burden.* Hebr. Utterance.

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so feeling God's fresh spirit, he broke out into blessing on hospitality and repentance, as his fathers had done into denunciations on cruelty. Assyria fallen, or falling, enters into the more hopeful horizon. In short, the passage marks the beginning of the more cosmopolitan tendencies of the later Jews, which might never have been thwarted, perverted, hardened, if Christian nations had not, with ineffable guilt and infatuation, played a persecuting part, and connected (let us hope not irrevocably) the hopes of Jewish piety and patriotism with a narrow bitterness.

1—4. The subject, and apparently the style, of this

2. A grievous vision is declared to me; the spoiler spoiling,[7] and the destroyer destroying; go up, Elam, Media, besiege; cause all her sighing to cease.

3. Therefore my loins are filled with sickness; pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of one child-bearing; I am distorted from hearing,[8] I am dismayed from beholding.

4. My heart is gone astray; confusion has bewildered me; the evening of my delight has been turned for me into terror.

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[7] *Spoiling* and *destroying*; or, with some MSS., Symmachus, and Lowth, spoiled, and destroyed. *Cause to cease*, so I suspect the Prophet wrote, in feminine imperative, הַשְׁבִּיתִי, but our existing text gives, הִשְׁבַּתִּי *I have caused to cease*, which is supposed spoken in the character of Jehovah.

[8] *From hearing, &c., i. e.* too distorted to hear, &c.

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chapter, carries us forward from Isaiah's age to that of Zechariah. Critics who feel bound by the existing arrangement of Isaiah's prophecies, are justified in seeing here a prediction of the capture of Babel by Cyrus, the child of the joint Medo-Persic stem. (Herod. i. 55. 91.) Those who are satisfied that many parts were put together by editors at an early but unfixed date, without proceeding originally from one pen, think that some pious Jew, about the time of Cyrus, described a contemporaneous event, which yet he may have sighed for before it came, and which he traces naturally to the will of the invisible and only wise God.

In either case, vision is the form in which the work of judgment unveils itself to the eyes of the Seer. The joint host comes as a whirlwind; God says to it, Go, execute my judgment; the sorrowful sighing of prisoners is brought to an end. Still, anxiety for his own countrymen, and why not sympathy with others among whom his childhood may have passed, makes the prophet groan as a man.

5. In arraying the table, *it is time* to watch the watch-tower ;[9] in eating and drinking, arise, princes, anoint the shield.

6. For thus spake to me the Lord, Go, bid the watchman stand, let him declare what he sees.

7. And[1] he shall see riding ; pairs of horsemen, riding of asses, riding of camels ; and let him heed with heed exceeding heedfully.

8. Then he cried *as* a lion,[2] My lord, I stand continually upon the watch-tower in the day-time, and in my ward-place I am set the whole nights ; and behold this is come, riding of men, a pair of horsemen.

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[9] *Watch-tower ;* or, divining mirror. Either the first three clauses of this verse may be descriptive, and only the fourth imperative, or the second and fourth may be imperatively antithetical, as given above.

[1] *And he shall see ;* or, And he saw; or, And when he sees, &c. then let him hearken heedfully.

[2] *As a lion.* As in Hezekiah's song, ch. xxxiii. ; or, *Lo, a lion, i. e.* a danger, as in Prov. xxii. and xxvi. 13 ; or more probably, the word *Arieh* is a misread text for some form of *Raah*, to see, *e.g.* for the future or participle. The LXX. have unintelligibly, Καὶ κάλεσον Οὐριάν εἰς τὴν σκοπιάν.

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5. The last fatal feast of the Babylonian dynasty, and the alarm of the storming, are described with bardic brevity, as by one who warned in vain, or encouraged in irony.

6, 7, 8. The imagery of these verses seems taken from watching on a tower ; yet possibly with a tinge of the language of divination.

Fundamentally, the watcher is the prophet's own mind, impelled by presentiment, as by something divine; as we ourselves, in some vast calamity, or amidst organised wrong veiled by falsehood, forebode by faith in God, that it cannot be for ever.

9. Then *He* answered and said, Fallen, fallen, is Babylon, and all the images of her gods hath *man* shattered to the earth.

10. O my thrashing,[3] and the fruit of my barn-floor, what I heard from the ETERNAL of hosts, the God of Israel, I have declared to you.

The Burden[4] *of Dumah* [i.e. *Idumæa.*]

11. One calls to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night; Watchman, what of the night?

12. Saith the watchman, Morning cometh, and also night; if ye will inquire, inquire; go, come again.

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[3] *My thrashing, i. e.* My afflicted people. Gr. οἱ ὀδυνώμενοι; or, as in the Gospels, those who are garnered by me.

[4] *Burden.* Hebr. Utterance.

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9. As soon as the army is seen plainly, as if by a watchman, the Prophet's rapid conclusion, as a divine sentence, is, Fallen is Babylon. The imagery has an illustration in Deborah's song: "Yea, she made answer to herself," Judges v. 29. More precisely, it suggests, and is reproduced in the writer's cry in the Apocalypse over the persecuting city of his own day. Revel. xviii. 2.

10. The preacher comforts his people, by pointing to the judgment on their captors.

11, 12. During an Assyrian invasion of Egypt, the Prophet might doubt, how far Idumæa would fall within the invader's sweep. He pictures his wavering presentiments in a dialogue between the inquiring people and his own foreboding spirit, which, as a watchman in twilight, sees neither light nor darkness, but alternation of both, as of joy and sorrow, and bids wait disclosure of the plans of Providence.

The Burden upon Arabia? or the Even.

13. In the forest at even[5] shall ye lodge, caravans of the sons of Dedan.

14. To meet the thirsty, the inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water;[6] with their bread they went before[7] the fugitive.

15. For they fled before the face of swords; from a drawn sword, and from a bent bow, and from grievousness of war.

16. For thus saith the Lord to me, Within yet a year, according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar comes to an end.

17. And the remnant of the number of the bow, the

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[5] *At even;* or, in Arabia. Gr. ἐσπέρας.

[6] *Brought water;* or, bring water.

[7] *Went before;* or, go before—if a perfect be read as an imperative.

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13. The Dedanites were Arabians, and are placed on the Persian gulf, with conjecture of a homonymous tribe near Edom. The title may have arisen in the sense of Arabia, from the word *Arav* in verse 13, which the Prophet may have written *Erev* in the sense of evening. At least Greek MSS. omit the title; its grammar differs from that of the neighbouring titles; the usage of the Gentile name Arab, is thought not so old as Isaiah, unless chap. xii. 20 (A. V. xiii. 20) be accepted as an instance.

Be that as it may, the passage 13—17 implies a clearer presentiment in the Prophet's mind of desolations coming over Arabia than over Edom. God has hired the Assyrian host, which within a year will sweep southward. No special crime is imputed, but the merciless tide sweeps over the guiltless. Hence the kindred tribes are exhorted to mitigate the calamity by hospitality, or described with vivid presentation as doing so.

mighty men of the sons of Kedar, shall be brought down to a little; for the ETERNAL, the God of Israel, has spoken.[8]

XIX.

The Burden of the Valley of Vision.

1. What aileth thee now, that thou art gone up all of thee to the house tops; *that thou art* full of stirrings, a city tumultuous, a city exulting?

2. Thy slain are not slain with sword; nor *thy dead men* dead in battle.

3. All thy rulers are fugitive together; they are bound without drawing bow;[9] all thy captured ones are bound together; from afar off they have taken flight.

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[8] We might hardly have expected to find Bishop Lowth remarking on this verse: "The prophetic Carmina of Marcius, foretelling the battle of Cannæ, Livy, xxv. 12, conclude with the same kind of solemn form, '*Nam mihi ita Jupiter fatus erat.*'" Yet apart from associations, whose exclusiveness in respect of piety resembles the kindred exclusiveness of patriotism, devout reason finds no *à priori* necessity for diviner vaticination in Syria than in Italy. In the case of Marcius, who "*vates illustris fuerat*," Livy remarks the greater distinctness of the prophecy published after the event, *carminis post rem actam editi.*

[9] *Without drawing bow;* or, so that they cannot draw it; or, bound with it.

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1. As the Valley of Jehovah's judgment (Joel iv. 6; Robinson, *Phys. G.* p. 93), originally a symbolical name, became localised in the vicinity of Jerusalem, by later Jews and our own travellers, so the Valley of Vision is commonly taken for Jerusalem. More naturally it is the Prophet's own place of retirement, some secluded spot from whence he looked with different eyes than the crowd of courtiers, or priests and people, on the world's course of thought and event.

There, as Isaiah saw the city abandoned to exultation,

4. Therefore I said, Look away from me, *that* I may weep bitterly; press not to comfort me, for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

5. For the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts, has a day of trouble and of trampling and of confusion in the valley of vision, shattering wall and shouting to the mountain;

6. And Elam bears the quiver, with chariot of man *and* horsemen, and Kir uncovers the shield;

7. And it came to pass, the choice of thy valleys were full of chariots, and the horsemen set *their* array towards the gate,

8. And thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest, and the breaches of the city of David you saw that they were many, and you gathered together the waters of the lower pool,

9. And you reckoned the houses of Jerusalem, and

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because Sennacherib, B.C. 713, in his march towards Egypt had spared Jerusalem, accepting the tribute (2 Kings xviii. 14—16) which Hezekiah, notwithstanding his preparations for war (2 Chron. xxxii. 3—5), had in prudence or timidity been prevailed upon to give, a feeling of shame and bitterness filled the Prophet's fervid mind; instead of sympathy with the shouting crowd. They have yielded without a blow; brought hostages instead of combatants. Let them alone; but let Isaiah weep.

5. Ask in solitude the secret counsels of Providence. They pointed to war or sorrow.

6. The Assyrian tributaries, from Elymais (*i.e.* Media or Persia), and the northern province of Armenia, had threatened.

7—9. All preparation seemed made for war.

brake the houses to fortify the wall, and made a reservoir[1] between the walls for the waters of the old pool;

10. But you looked not to the maker thereof, neither regarded him that fashioned it long ago.

11. And the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts, called in that day to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding sackcloth;

12. But behold revelry and rejoicing, slaughtering oxen, and butchering sheep; eating flesh and drinking wine; eating and drinking, because to-morrow we shall die.

13. And the ETERNAL of hosts was revealed in[2] my ears, Surely this iniquity of yours will not be purged[3] until you die, spake the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts.

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[1] *Reservoir;* or, canal.

[2] *Was revealed.* The construction may be elliptical; it was revealed from the Eternal; or, the words might be pointed, *in the ears of Jehovah.* Comp. Isaiah v. 9.

[3] *Will not be purged;* or, shall not be forgiven you.

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10. Yet in that day was little thought, either of Jehovah, (if we so understand the tenth verse,) or (if such be a description unworthy of the Almighty,) of David and Solomon, the more magnanimous kings who had arranged the city of old.

11—13. So instead of penitence for sin, and crying to Heaven for strength, secular feasting had accompanied the preparation, and succeeded the truce. All this seems to Isaiah an unpardonable sin, or ingrained weakness. The word *purged,* Heb. *covered,* opens, as elsewhere, the whole question of atonement, and may be rendered, *covered, atoned, forgiven, purged,* according as we regard etymology, or sacrificial usage, or the side of the Divine mind, or the

14. Thus spake the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts, Go thy way[4] to this treasurer, to Shebna, who is over the household;

15. What hast thou here, and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewn thyself here a tomb, *as* one that heweth on high his tomb, engraving in the rock for himself a dwelling-place?

16. Behold the ETERNAL casting thee out with a strong man's cast, and shrouding[5] thee with a shroud;

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[4] *Go thy way.* Heb. Go, come.

[5] *Shrouding, &c.;* or, covering utterly, *i. e.* obliterating; or, veiling for criminal's death.

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side of human renovation; each view having some truth, anthropomorphic or practical, but one appealing more to feeling or contrition, another more to thought or philosophy.

14—18. What is to come of the worldly-wise Shebna, who advised probably the king's submission, after all the stopping of the waters, as if for resistance? Isaiah denounces him as unworthy of his place; would have him treated as a criminal led with veiled face to execution, or as a pebble slung from a sling; and not so much predicts as commands his deposition by the king, suggesting (19) Eliakim as his successor.

All Old Testament history and analogy, (its alternate rule of Prophetic school, Priesthood, Monarchy in spite of the Prophets, and events proceeding in the natural way of Providence, though described in language of vivid reference to supernatural causation,) combine with the nature of things to shew that Isaiah here speaks humanly; joining, we might say, the politician to the preacher; at least the immediateness of the Divine command must not be pressed. The interference of the Puritan exhorters with

17. He will whirl and sling thee *with a* sling, as a pebble into a land of wide coasts; there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory *shall be* the reproach of the house of thy lord.

18. Yea, I expell thee from thy station, and from thy state shall *man* thrust thee down.

19. And it shall be in that day that I will call to my servant Eliakim, son of Chilkiah, and clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle;

20. And I will commit thy government into his hand, that he may be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah;

21. And I will set the key of the house of David upon his shoulder, that when he opens, there shall be none to close, when he closes, there shall be none to open;

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their generals, treated otherwise by Cromwell than by Leslie, is no unfair or irreverent parallel. Why should Almighty God, who has given poet, preacher, and prophet the sacred task of keeping alive His fear and the light of His presence in men's hearts, give them also power of dictating secular measures to soldier or senator? All experience shews that He has not done so; when such men forsake their primary vocation, unless they are extraordinarily gifted, their counsels seldom prosper.

19, 20. Isaiah desires that Eliakim may succeed Shebna.

21. The large key, borne on the shoulder, as Lowth shews from the Hymn of Callimachus to Ceres, was proverbial with the Greeks, no less than with the Jews, as a sign of office. The same symbol may be figuratively transferred to religious power, which consists primarily in unlocking men's hearts by persuasion, or in praying before the doors not made with hands which are spiritually opened by prayer. Secondly, the image, or figure, may be trans-

22. And I will fasten him as a nail in a trustworthy place; so that he shall be a glorious throne to his father's house;

23. So that they will hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring[6] and the issue, all vessels of smallness, from vessels of goblets even to all vessels of flasks;

24. In that day, is the ETERNAL of host's saying, shall be removed the nail that is fastened in a trustworthy place, and shall be hewn off and fall; and the burden which *is* upon it shall be cut off; for the ETERNAL has spoken.

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[6] *Offspring and issue.* The Hebrew is too coarse for literal translation. The meaning is, that all shall depend upon Eliakim, as things hang on the peg of a tent, or on nails in the Temple.

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ferred to the moral discipline, which in administering or withholding religious rites has a sphere limited by reason, and owned in Heaven so far as truth and right guide it on earth. Thirdly, St. Peter, by admitting the first Gentile converts opened to them as it were in a figure the doors of Christ's kingdom. The keys which the painters give to the Apostle belong to the poetry of art; the primacy hence claimed by the bishops of Rome is a fable.

23, 24. As a thousand bucklers hung in David's armoury, (Song of Sol. iv. 4,) so all shall hang on one who will not counsel submission. He who has hitherto seemed a nail in a sure place must make way for a worthier. We infer from the mention of Shebna in subordination to Eliakim, 2 Kings xviii. 37, that Isaiah's denunciation had weight with the king, though hardly to the full force of its terms.

XX.

The Burden of Tyre.

Josephus, A. J. ix. 14. 21, describes Shalmaneser, after his three years siege and capture of Samaria, as carrying war throughout all Syria and Phœnicia; and as having his name consequently mentioned in the Tyrian archives under the reign of Elulæus; a statement which Josephus supports by this quotation from Menander, who compiled in Greek the chronicles of Tyre:

"And Elulæus by name reigned thirty-six years. From him the men of Chittim revolted, and he sailed thither, and reduced them again. Against these the king of the Assyrians sent, and invaded hostilely all Phœnicia, then having made peace with all he returned back, and from the Tyrians revolted Sidon and Ake (so Vatican MS. but others Arke, as Gesen.) and Old Tyre, and many other cities, and surrendered themselves to the king of the Assyrians. Therefore, the Tyrians not having submitted to him, the king turned back again against them, the Phœnicians having manned in conjunction with him sixty ships and eight hundred oarsmen. Against these the Tyrians sailed with twelve ships, and the enemy's ships having been scattered took prisoners up to five hundred men. The renown of all in Tyre was bruited abroad on account of these exploits. Then the king of the Assyrians broke up camp, but set guards at the river and the aqueducts, to prevent the Tyrians from drawing water. And this continuing five years they endured drinking out of artificial wells."

And these things, adds Josephus, are written in the archives of the Tyrians, and it is to Shalmaneser king of the Assyrians that they refer. So far in his Jewish Antiquities, ninth book. Again in the tenth book from Philostratus, and in his treatise against Apion from Phœnician authority, he states that in the reign of Ithobal, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for thirteen years. Neither

of these sieges appears to have been successful, whether we consider the implication of Tyrian or the silence of Greek authors; though Jerome (on Ezekiel xxvi. 7) infers from the Prophets that the city must have been taken. In this inference he was followed formerly by scholars who did not observe that his motive was a gratuitous prejudice against Gentile testimony, while the language of the Prophets cannot alone, for many reasons, be assumed as a guarantee that a presentiment was fulfilled. We have nothing here to do with Alexander's siege, which succeeded, four centuries after Shalmaneser, three after Nebuchadnezzar.

The question arises, does our 20th chapter (A. V. 23rd) describe or predict Shalmaneser's siege, or Nebuchadnezzar's. Those critics who ascribe the chapter to Isaiah, mostly answer the first; those who imagine traces of a later Prophet, answer the second. A few only of those who read the whole as Isaiah's are led by the mention of Chaldæans (v. 12) to think Nebuchadnezzar's siege predicted a century before it took place. Their main argument will have little weight, if we either remember that Chaldæans might naturally serve in the Assyrian army, or follow Ewald's happy, though needless, conjecture in reading Canaanites (*i. e.* Tyrians) for Chaldæans. Though the opinion of scholars inclines to Jeremiah's age, no overwhelming reason compels us to introduce any other author than Isaiah, nor any other siege than Shalmaneser's. This event lasting over five years, in the bloom of the Prophet's activity, may well have attracted his attention; the ruin of the mainland Tyre may have led him to anticipate the same fate for the insular city, or have suggested language which need not be pressed with prosaic literalism. The 26th, 27th, 28th, chapters of Ezekiel applying again under the Babylonian the imagery used by Isaiah under the Assyrian, should teach us how often contemporaneous sermon or song of Hebrew seer becomes

1. Howl, ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering;[7] from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them.

2. Be dumb, dwellers of the isle; whom the merchants of Zidon, crossing the sea, replenished; and whose re-

[7] *No entering;* or, no entering from the land of Chittim; captivity is upon them. This rendering, suggested by the Greek οὐκέστι ἔρχονται ἐκ γῆς Κ. ἦκται αἰχμάλωτος, is almost more probable than the one in the text. The great ships of the Phœnician colonies in Spain and Cyprus are conceived held aloof by blockade. Chittim is the Cyprian Citium παντὶ δὲ δῆλον ὅτι Κίτιον ἡ Κυπρίων νῆσος . . Κίτιοι γὰρ Κύπριοι καὶ Ρόδιοι. Epiphan. adv. Hær. 30, §. 25 (Ges.) and Cic. De Fin. iv. 20.

applicable by recurrence of event, while the judicial interpretation of history as having its root in the Divine Will, lends in appearance a colour of predictiveness not strictly inherent. It would seem from Ezek. xxix. 18, that insular Tyre did not succumb. We cannot justly say with Reland, "Res ita evenit, uti prædicta est, etiam si nulli veterum literis id consignâssent." (Ges. in l.)

1. Why the mainland Tyre was called Old, unless by etymological mistake (such as happens in Cornish names) we hardly know; for the island Tyre had allowed it by Josephus an antiquity of 230 years before Solomon (1220 B.C.) and its priests claimed for it (Herod. ii. 14) an origin fifteen centuries earlier still, (2,700 B.C.) nor have we much ground for rejecting the earlier date. The renowned city, the subject of our chapter, is the island Tyre, which survived or recovered from many sieges, extorting Jerome's reluctant testimony to its prosperity in his time, becoming in the Middle Ages an archbishopric, and though depopulated by the Saracens, recovering in our own day a modest place among the ports of Syria. The Prophet sees a state of siege, or captivity; merchantmen from Cyprus and Spain, the envy of so many seas, forbidden to enter.

venue by the mighty waters was the seed of the Nile,[8] the river's harvest; and she was the emporium of nations.

3. Be abashed, Zidon, for the sea saith, the strength of the sea, saying, I have not travailed, neither borne child, and have not nourished young men, neither brought up maidens.

4. As the report *comes* to Egypt, they shall be in pangs, at the report of Tyre.

5. Cross over to Tarshish, howl, inhabitants of the isle:

6. Is this your *city* that exulted, whose antiquity was from the days of old? her feet shall carry her afar off to migrate.

7. Who has counselled this against Tyre, that wore the tiara,[9] whose merchants *were* princes, whose traffickers the honoured of the earth?

8. The ETERNAL of hosts has counselled it, to stain the pride of all brilliancy, to confound all the honoured of the earth.

9. Cross over to thy land as a river, daughter of Tarshish; there is no girdle[1] more.

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[8] *The Nile.* Hebr. Shichor=Black, Gr. μέλας. Found only here and in Jer. ii. 18, 1 Chron. xiii. 5, Jos. xiii. 13.

[9] *That wore the tiara;* or, that gave crowns to others.

[1] *Girdle,* of strength, or compression; the mother-city no longer restraining her colonies.

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2. Corn, wont to come from Egypt (as in later time from Judæa) is excluded.

3. Childlessness takes the place of crowds.

4. Distant lands are astonished.

5, 6, 9, Refuge is sought in colonies by emigrants from the famous metropolis.

7, 8. God has wrought it all, Διὸς δὲ τελείετο βουλή.

10. He stretched forth his hand upon the sea, he made kingdoms tremble; the ETERNAL gave command against Canaan,[2] to destroy her strongholds,

11. And said, Thou shalt exult no more, thou oppressed one, Maiden daughter of Zidon; arise, cross to Chittim; also there thou shalt have no rest;

12. Lo! a land of Chaldæans is here;[3] the people *is as if it* has not been; Assyria is its founder; for men of the wilderness they set up the towers thereof, they raised her palaces; he has made it into a ruin.

13. Howl, ships of Tarshish; for your stronghold is destroyed.

14. And it shall be in that day that Tyre shall be for-

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[2] *Canaan.* A. V. merchant [city]. LXX. and Vulg. Chanaan.

[3] *Here.* Hebr. *This*, which may agree with people; or with land; since Isaiah uses land as masc. g. *Men of the wilderness;* or, wild creatures, comp. ch. xii. 20. By altering the stops, we preserve the grammatical concord of number, and escape the difficulty of Chaldæans, so ancient a race in the Bible, being described as new. Ewald for Chaldæan conjectures Canaan, as in v. 10. A right understanding of this passage, as describing the desolation of Phœnicia, destroys the chief argument for ascribing to the Chaldees a Kurdish, instead of a Semitic origin (See note on chap. xii. 43). It is natural to prefer making the whole chapter of one age and writer; yet the last four verses seem to me separable from the commencement. I think this chiefly, comparing Jerem. xxv. and xxvii. and Ezek. xxviii.

10—13. The result of God's desolating word is that even colonial refuge fails; the Tyrians so utterly vanish, that their land becomes a land of Assyrian mercenaries; Assyria becomes its founder; wild men, or creatures, possess the palaces which the people of Tyre built not for themselves in event; God, or his stern missionary, the Assyrian, brings all to ruin.

14—17. A perception dawns upon Isaiah, or some one who rounded off his poem, in the days of Jeremiah, or

gotten seventy years, as it were the days of one king;[4] after the end of seventy years shall be to Tyre the song as of a woman for hire.

15. Take the harp, go round the city, hireling that hast been forgotten; make melody sweetly, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.

16. And it shall be after the end of seventy years, the ETERNAL will visit Tyre, and she will turn to her love-gift, and go a hiring with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

17. But her merchandise and her love-gift shall be consecrate to Jehovah; it shall not be treasured nor laid up, but for the dwellers before Jehovah shall be her merchandise, to eat abundantly, and for clothing that endures.

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[4] Here, as in v. 1, the LXX. turn Tarshish into Carthage; Καρχηδόνος, which shows Carthage to have been the chief Tyrian colony known to them; and suggests the germ of an adaptation of prophecy. If Carthage had fallen in Patristic times, it would undoubtedly have been claimed as the orthodox interpretation.

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when the Babylonian power was waning, that the ruin of Tyre need not be final. Seventy years is not only a round prophetic period, but was the duration of Babylon's supremacy, B.C. 610—540. Had the first ruin lasted seventy years, the second siege could not have happened. Hence, not here predictively, but by strong yet vague presentiment, (or else by subsequent filling in of this passage, as good critics conceive,) the Prophet anticipates revival for Tyre, as in part took place. He still disparages her commerce by an unlovely name connecting it with idolatry, but trusts it may be consecrated to better things, to the service of Jehovah.

XXI.—XXIII.

In the next three chapters (A. V. 24—27), we have a portion distinguished from the rest of Isaiah by subject, treatment, and style. We find description of a wasted land, apparently Judæa; threats against a victorious city, probably Babylon; in both cases an abstinence from direct name, and a style of allusion which implies subjection, as in the Apocalypse it became necessary to pourtray Rome as Babylon. The style is even more artificial than is usual with Isaiah, in accumulating words of similar sound and recurrence, or but slight intensification of meaning; the thought, instead of flowing forward, is often checked by the phrase, until it becomes hard to disentangle, the effect in places of the 23rd chapter being that of a patchwork of quotations.

Such reasons as these, confirmed by minutely disputable peculiarities of phrase (which may be found in Gesenius, Ewald, Knobel), justify the suggestion that this group of chapters was interposed by an early editor conjecturally amidst Isaiah's works, but did not come from the great Prophet's hand. Such a view is in no way conceived in the interest of any theory of prediction or the reverse, but depends upon internal probability alone.

The moral horizon of the chapters is such as to suit the period of the Babylonish captivity, when alternations of sorrow and hope would haunt the lingerers spared in each hermitage of the sacred land, and cries to the God of vengeance would now be prompted by some tyranny, then checked by a sense of unworthiness of the suffering people, and finally exalted into stern thanksgiving, as the fall of Babylon became imminent, if not already known. Such is substantially the view of most critics. Ewald, who deserves to have even his conjectures respectfully weighed, finds traces rather of the time of Cambyses, when the little realm already languished in its revival, and patriot hopes seemed to bring forth wind. Some features suit

XXI.

1. Behold the ETERNAL emptying the land, and making it void;[4] he turns its face downward, and scatters its inhabitants abroad;

2. So that it be, as with people, so with priest; as with servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the receiver of interest, so with the payer of interest to him.

3. Utterly emptied shall be the land, and plundered utterly: for JEHOVAH has uttered this word.[5]

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[4] *Void;* or, waste.

[5] With this verse the dramatic command of the Almighty ends. In the next verse begins the description of its effect.

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this view; though a comparison of the style of Haggai and Zechariah induces me to prefer the former. The hunger and thirst for vindication, if not for revenge, so natural to an oppressed people, and aided in this case by trust in an ever-living God, the arbiter of all things, might well rise into those fervent forebodings, which have a tinge of prediction, though not in the external sense commonly conceived.

If any one prefers making Isaiah the author, he may either call the entire piece predictive; or he may easily imagine dealings with the Assyrian in the less fortunate days of Ahaz or Hezekiah, to which parts of the picture will, not quite perfectly, correspond. The name of Assyria, conjoined with Egypt, at the end of chap. 23, is the strongest argument in favour of this view, and one of even considerable weight.

1—3. The Prophet, fugitive probably in some Adullam or Carmel, asks himself why the holy land mourns, and

4. The land mourns and fades, the kingdom[6] languishes and fades; the lofty of the people of the land languish:

5. Yea, the land is polluted beneath its inhabitants; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the covenant, *which were* for ever.[7]

6. Therefore has a curse devoured the land, and the dwellers therein are desolate;[8] therefore the inhabitants of the land are burnt, and little of man remains.

7. The new wine mourns, the vine languishes, all the merry of heart sigh.

8. The mirth of tabrets is at rest; the sound of them that exult has ended; the mirth of the harp is at rest.

9. Men drink not wine with song; strong drink is bitter to the drinkers.

10. Broken up is the city of confusion; every house is closed from entering.

11. There is a crying over the wine in the streets;[9] all joy is darkened; the merriment of the land is gone captive.

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[6] *Kingdom;* or, world, *i. e.* dwelling-place, ἡ οἰκουμένη.

[7] *For ever;* or, of old, as Amos vii. 11. [8] *Desolate;* or, guilty.

[9] *A crying over the wine; i. e.* over its loss; or else, the wine-shout of joy has vanished.

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is led by the Spirit of God into that depth of mystery, the Eternal Will, out of which all events necessarily spring. So with bold figure he describes the Causer of all causes, who is from everlasting to everlasting, as planning in counsel, or denouncing in speech beforehand, what afflicted men have seen brought about.

4—10. All customary signs of mourning are described in language partly borrowed from older Prophets, especially from Joel.

11. There might seem a want of reality in making the

12. In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.

13. For thus there shall be[1] in the heart of the land, in the midst of the populations, as the shaking of an olive, as gleanings when the vintage is done.

14. These lift up their voice, they sing for the majesty of the ETERNAL, they cry aloud from the sea.

15. Therefore in the lights[2] [*of the East*] glorify the ETERNAL, *and* in the isles of the West[3] the name of the ETERNAL, the God of Israel.

16. From the end of the earth we have heard songs, a glory to the righteous.

17. But I said, My wasting, my wasting,[4] woe is to me; the plunderers have plundered, and plunder have the plunderers borne away,

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[1] *Shall be;* or, is.

[2] *In the lights.* Vulg. doctrinis. But some Greek MSS. give islands twice, which is preferable. The critics conjecture variously, rivers, islands, populations, each plausibly, but not demonstrably.

[3] *The West.* Heb. the sea.

[4] *Wasting;* or, leanness. Vulg. Secretum meum; a mystical rendering. LXX. Οὐαὶ· τοῖς ἀθετοῦσιν.

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grief of a country turn on the loss of its wine; (whence some interpret verse 11 as if the joyous cry over the wine goblet had vanished); but probably the writer, having Joel's language in his memory, adapts it to his own time, with somewhat less appropriateness than it applied to the plague of locusts.

12—16. Notwithstanding the desolation of the land, a remnant, chiefly of exiles in countries from the rising sun to the western sea, find hope, and glorify God for gleams of prosperity, or for their own escape.

17—21. The Prophet, more desponding, sees but little resurrection of his country. A general confusion frustrates the hope of refuge.

18. Terror and pit and snare are upon thee, inhabitant of the land.

19. And it comes to pass, he that fleeth from the sound of the terror falls into the pit, and he that cometh up from the depth of the pit is captured in the snare; for the windows from on high are opened, and the foundations of the land totter;

20. The land is broken with breaking, the land melts with melting, the land moves with movement.

21. The land reels, reeling like a drunkard; and passes away like a *night's* lodging; and its transgression is heavy upon it; so that it falls and rises not again.

22. And it shall be in that day, the ETERNAL shall visit the host of the height on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

23. So that they are gathered with the gathering of a prisoner[5] in a pit, and are enclosed in the enclosure, and after a multitude of days shall they be visited.

24. When the moon is confounded, and the sun ashamed, because JEHOVAH reigns in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his elders gloriously.[6]

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[5] *Prisoner;* or, bundle. Vulg. unius fascis.

[6] *Gloriously;* or, glory. Vulg. glorificabitur. LXX. δοξασθήσεται; but also for sun and moon, ἡ πλίνθος and τὸ τεῖχος; reading לְבֵנָה brick, and חוֹמָה a wall; wrongly, no doubt.

22—24. The mighty who ruled on earth as the stars in their majesty on high, are cast down in Israel; like potentates may yet be cast down in Babel, if after many days the God of Israel, fountain of right and judge of men, would take to Himself his great power, and reign. Nature would then own her God.

XXII.

1. ETERNAL, thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will make known thy name; for thou hast wrought marvel, *wrought* counsels from afar faithfulness *and* truth.[7]

2. For thou hast made from a city into a heap; a defenced citadel into a ruin; a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall not be builded for ever.

3. Therefore shall the strong people honour thee, the city of terrible nations dread thee.

4. For thou hast been a stronghold to the weak; a stronghold to the needy in his distress; a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones[8] *was* as a storm *against* the fort.

5. As heat in a parched place, thou lowerest the tumult of strangers; *as* heat in the shadow of a cloud, the branch of the terrible ones is lowered.

6. And in this mountain shall the ETERNAL of hosts make for all populations a banquet of fatlings, a banquet of wine-dregs;[9] of fatlings full of marrow, of wine-dregs well refined;

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[7] *Truth.* Heb. faithfully.

[8] *The blast of the terrible ones.* LXX. πνεῦμα ἀνθρώπων ἀδικουμένων. The Heb. *Ruach* is the word elsewhere translated *spirit*, and acquires its meaning, Divine, human, holy, wicked, eternal, or transitory, from the context. Hence, except in opposition to letter, or flesh, or corpse, we do ill in religion to use the word alone, as if every kind of vivifying impulse were wholesome.

[9] *Wine-dregs, i. e.* wine at its utmost strength, yet refined.

1—4. The signs of the times have this encouragement, that Babel is threatened by the tribes of Iran shaking off her yoke, and reducing her proud towers. Such a stroke of Providence succours the vanquished, recalling the Babylonian oppressors to their own menaced city.

5. God has refreshment for all our need.

7. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the veil that is spread over all populations, and the covering[1] that covers over all nations;

8. He will destroy death for ever,[2] and the Lord, the ETERNAL, will wipe away tears from off all faces, and take away the rebuke of his people from off all the earth; for the ETERNAL hath said *it*.

9. And *men* shall say in that day, Lo! this is our God, whom we waited for, that he should save us;[3] this is the ETERNAL, for whom we waited; let us exult, and be glad in his salvation.

10. For the hand of the ETERNAL shall rest upon this

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[1] *Covering;* or, unction, if from נסך, as the Rabbinical Grammarians take it; but more probably its meaning is borrowed from סכך to cover.

[2] *For ever;* or, in victory. Gr. *ἰσχύσας* here, elsewhere *εἰς νῖκος*. Better *Vulg.* Præcipitabit mortem in sempiternum; though comp. 1 Cor. xv. 54.

[3] *That he should save;* or, And he saved.

6—9. Instead of mourning on Zion shall yet be feasting; instead of a veil, alike of oppression and of ignorance, as when the proud think the judgments of God far off out of their sight, shall be light from Heaven; death, or its instruments, swallowed up, and those who trust in God against earthly might vindicated. The imagery is of so lofty a kind as to rise beyond temporal deliverance, whether the Zoroastrian faith, learnt in the Exile, had suggested a resurrection of at least the good; or whether passionate sorrow, borrowing strength from faith, divined such hope, refusing to believe that God could fail his own; or whether, as I would fain think, some Diviner inspiration, beyond the imagery of poetry, here breathed into man's heart a trust in something which is yet to come, not for Hebrews in Palestine, but for all who love God beyond the grave.

mountain, and Moab shall be crushed under him, as straw is crushed in the waters of the dunghill.[4]

11. When he spreads forth his hands in the midst thereof, as the swimmer spreads himself to swim, then shall *God* bring down his pride, together with the devices[5] of his hands.

12. And the fortress of the high place of thy walls will he cast down, lay low, bring to the ground, to the dust.

13. In that day shall be sung this song in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; victoriously are established[6] walls and parapet.

14. Open the gates, that the righteous nation may enter, observing faithfulness.

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[4] *Dunghill.* The word *waters* may be a mere preposition. Is the correspondence of the Hebrew Domen and the Kymric Tomen accidental? it is curious.

[5] *Devices.* Vulg. allisione manuum; Lowth, gripe; Knobel, striving; Ges. cunning, or intertwining.

[6] *Victoriously are established.* The Hebrew permits either salvation, *i. e.* victory, or wall and parapet, to be the predicate. *Vulg.* Salvator ponetur in eâ murus, &c. cannot be right. Parapet, antemurale.

10—12. If the Prophet ever left his own land in a moment's higher aspiration, he soon returns to it; he pictures Israel's enemies, under the name of Moab, an inveterate foe (comp. Judges iii. 28), brought down in distress, like an exhausted swimmer whom the waves overwhelm; their citadel destroyed, 13, while Jerusalem rises. Either God saving Zion is instead of wall and parapet; or, more naturally, success and triumph attend the rebuilding.

14. The return is described in the text of Israel, but by analogy the entrance of true men upon the rest which God prepares.

15. Him whose mind is stayed on thee,[7] thou wilt keep in peace; in peace, because he trusteth in thee.

16. Trust in the ETERNAL for ever; since in JAH the ETERNAL is a rock of ages.[8]

17. For he casts down the dwellers on high; the lofty city, he lays low; lays her low to the ground, brings her to the dust.

18. The foot tramples on her; the steps of the afflicted, the strides of the feeble.

19. The way for the just is *all* rightfulness; thou weighest rightfully[9] the path of the just.

20. Even in the way of thy judgments, O ETERNAL, we have waited for thee; to thy name and thy remembrance is the desire of our soul.

21. With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early; for

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[7] *Whose mind is stayed on thee.* LXX. *φυλάσσων ἀλήθειαν, ἀντιλαμβανόμενος ἀληθείας.* Vulg. "Vetus error abiit," a strange rendering. The Hebrew is pointed with fuller stop after the second Peace.

[8] *A rock of ages.* So the Hebrew, the plural of עלם, as in "sæcula sæcularum," being an argument against those who find absolute Eternity in the word. Comp. Prov. xxii. 28.

[9] Not as Vulg. "Semita justi recta est," the way of the righteous is uprightness; but rather, the way of God works out right for the righteous; sets him right. So, rightfully = in such a way as to do him right. Gr. *ἐκδίκησον*, in St. Luke xviii. 3.

15—18. However dark things may seem, trust in God brings peace. The simple and oppressed have their day in God's reckoning.

19. Not of mere vindictiveness, as moderns are too apt to think, but of a love of right, and faith in God's righteousness, the Prophet dares to conceive the Almighty pledged by His own innermost Being to restore the deranged balance of the world.

20, 21. All this part breathes a holy and righteous

as thy judgments are on earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

22. *If* the wicked is treated graciously, he learns not righteousness; in the land of uprightness he deals perversely, and will not behold the majesty of the ETERNAL.

23. ETERNAL, thy hand is lifted up, they gaze not; let them gaze, and be confounded at *thy* jealousy for *thy* people; yea, let fire devour them *that are* thine enemies.

24. ETERNAL, adjudge peace to us; for thou also hast wrought for us all our works.

25. JEHOVAH, our God, lords besides thee have lorded it over us; only in thee will we make mention of thy name.

26. The dead *nations* live not, the silent rise no more; because[1] thou hast visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory perish.

27. Thou hast increased the nation, JEHOVAH, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified; thou hast extended all the borders of the land.

28. JEHOVAH, in distress they visited thee; they poured out supplication,[2] *when* thy chastening reached them.

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[1] *Because;* or, therefore.

[2] *Supplication;* or, whispering: as if the low murmur of prayer.

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trust in Him who cannot lie, and who will not desert His own who trust in Him.

23. The inveteracy of the Heathen renders them at home bad neighbours, abroad ill allies.

24. He, by whose better breathing the Hebrews hated idols and worshipped a God of holiness, owes them peace for His name's sake.

25. From idols, now broken, they look to Him, or from human oppressors ask deliverance.

26. Old oppressors become extinct.

27—30. Israel conceives hopes; but no fruitful birth

29. Like a travailing woman, *when* she draws nigh to bear child, is in pain, *and* cries out in her pangs; so were we in thy sight, JEHOVAH.

30. We travailed, we were in pangs, we brought forth as it were wind; the land was not wrought deliverance; and no inhabitants of the kingdom fall[3] [*from the womb*].

31. Let thy dead live; let *them that are* my fallen body arise; awake and sing, dwellers of the dust; for thy dew is the dew of herbs,[4] and the earth shall give birth[5] to the dead.

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[3] *Fall; i.e.* are born: taking the world, ἡ οἰκουμένη, for the land of Israel: which is confirmed by verse 31.

[4] *Dew of herbs;* or, of light, *i.e.* morning. Vulg. Ros lucis. Gr. ἴαμα. Michälis, the mallow, as used medicinally.

[5] *Give birth.* Heb. cause to fall, as if from the womb.

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comes of the disappointed nation's womb. Here, as in Micah iv. 2, 8, and Hosea xii. 10, is a good instance of the figure childbirth applied to a nation. Comp. St. John xvi. 21.

31. Turning to God, the Prophet invokes Him, that the carcase of the nation may yet live, its dead bones be animated, and a revival of buried hopes ensue, if not of the very dead themselves. I find myself with regret compelled by the sequence of thought to tone down the loftier interpretation by which we would so gladly make this remarkable group of chapters speak of the veil of flesh and sense taken from our longing souls, and the light of Eternity spread, instead of sorrow, over Mankind brought home to the living God. But Bishop Lowth remarks, that "It appears from hence that the doctrine of the Resur- "rection of the dead was at that time a popular and com- "mon doctrine; for an image which is assumed in order "to represent anything in the way of allegory or metaphor, "whether poetical or prophetical, must be an image com- "monly known; otherwise, it will not answer the pur- "pose." Whatever may be the force of this remark, it is

XXIII.

1. Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, and close thy doors around thee; hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation pass over.

2. For, behold the ETERNAL comes forth from his place, to visit the iniquity of the inhabitants of the land upon them; so that the earth uncovers her murders,[6] and no more conceals her slain.

3. In that day shall the ETERNAL with his sore and great and strong sword visit upon Leviathan *the* fleeing[7] serpent, and upon Leviathan the crooked serpent, and slay the monster which is in the sea.

4. In that day, A vineyard of red wine,[8] sing to her, I the ETERNAL am her guardian; I water her moment by

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[6] *Murders.* Heb. Bloods.

[7] *Fleeing.* LXX. *φεύγοντα*, in the sense of mobility; or, *a bar.* Lat. vectem; in the sense of stiffness. So Lowth, rigid: this rendering is defensible, but the first probable.

[8] *Of red wine.* So the text; but according to some MSS. a desirable vineyard, חמד for חמר.

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in that light, as implying a conception among the Hebrews of the survival of disembodied spirits, that the story of Samuel and the Witch of Endor is chiefly remarkable, and on that account alone it is important.

1, 2. It is difficult not to find, in this splendid picture of God's coming to make inquisition for the blood of His people, some image or figure of a wider judgment, a final summoning by the Eternal Creator of all the mighty criminals of earth to their due account.

3. The effect of God's advent is to smite the imperial kingdoms, typified as monsters, whether Babylon singly is meant, or less probably, the Medo-Persians, or others, in addition.

4—10. Israel will yet be protected as a choice vine-

moment; lest any trample upon her, I guard her night and day.

5. Fury[9] is not in me; will any[1] set brier and thorn against me in battle? I would trample each of them, I would burn each altogether.

6. Else let him stay himself on my strength, that he may make peace with me; *so* peace shall he make with me.

7. Jacob shall make generations[2] take root; Israel shall blossom and bud; until they fill the face of the realm[3] with fruit.

8. Has he smitten him, as he smote his smiter? or is he slain according to the slaughter of his slayers?[4]

9. In measure by measure, when she casts forth *her shoots*,[5] thou pleadest with her; he lulls his rough wind[6] in the day of storm.[7]

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[9] *Fury.* According to some MSS. a wall, in which case it must be referred to the vineyard. So Lowth in his fondness for change.

[1] *Will any one.* Hebr, Who will, as if expressing a wish.

[2] *Generations.* Hebr. The coming; whether of coming men, or coming days; most critics prefer the latter.

[3] *Realm;* or, world.

[4] *His slayers.* So probably the Prophet: but the Scribes pointed it, they that are slain by him.

[5] *She casts forth her shoots,* as Psalm xliv. 2; or, He casts her away.

[6] *He lulls his rough wind;* or, He removes her with his rough wind, as Kimchi, and most critics. The word *Hagah* has two leading senses, removing and meditating. The latter, followed by the LXX. Vulg. and Chaldee, may with a slight metaphor be extended to bear out the beautiful rendering of the A. V. "he stayeth his rough wind," which suits best the sequence of thought, though it has least authority of critics.

[7] *Storm.* Hebr. East wind.

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yard; her tramplers trodden down like briars; fresh times, or generations, becoming prosperous, with heavier woe to the enemy, but staying the rough wind of the East for those who trusted God.

10. Therefore by this the iniquity of Jacob shall be atoned,[8] and this is altogether the fruit of putting away his sin, on his making all the stones of the altar like chalk-stones split asunder, so that neither statues of the moon stand, nor statues of the sun.

11. For the fortified city is become solitary, a habitation dissolved and deserted as the wilderness,

12. There shall the calf pasture, and there lie down, and feed upon her branches ; when her foliage withers, they shall be broken; women come, and set her on flame.

13. For it is a people of no understanding; therefore his Maker hath no compassion on him, and he that formed him no pity.

14. And it shall be in that day, the ETERNAL will beat *the branches*[1] from the channel of the River to the brook of Egypt,[2] and ye shall be gathered each to each, O sons of Israel;

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[8] *Atoned ;* or covered.

[9] *Foliage;* or, aggregate of branches, cf. Job xxix. 19. Properly anything lopped ; if taken as harvest, the word *broken* might be pointed actively and explained as seeking corn. Comp. Gen. xlii. and xliii. &c.

[1] *Beat (the branches), i.e.* as of the olive, Deut. xxiv. 20 ; or as with us of the apple and walnut, to gather the fruit.

[2] *The brook of Egypt*, Wadi el Arish. Gr. ἕως Ῥινοκορούρων, *i. e.* the frontier town.

11, 14. Not Jerusalem, as some think, but Babylon is probably meant as the proud city humbled. The passage above, in chapter xii. illustrates this.

14, 15. The result of Babylon's fall is likely to be not merely the restoration of Judah, but the recovery of the stray exiles from both kingdoms, wherever carried by Assyrians formerly, or spread in search of refuge throughout Egypt. The kingdom may hope to have its original limits restored, from the Euphrates to El Arish, the southern boundary.

15. And it shall be in that day, it shall be sounded with a great trumpet, so that they come that are perishing in the land of Assur, and the fugitives in the land of Egypt, and they shall worship the ETERNAL in the mount of the sanctuary[3] at Jerusalem.

[3] *Mount of sanctuary;* or, holy mount.

XXIV.

Leaving the chapters which described the faint hopes of Judæa during the exile, or her slow revival after it, we proceed to a group of six, here arranged as five, chapters, which recall us to Hezekiah's reign, and bear in every respect the stamp of Isaiah. The first verses of ch. xxiv. (A. V. xxviii.) shew Samaria hardly fallen, nodding to her fall. Hence this chapter is fixed, according to the received chronology, between 726 and 721 B.C. (2 Kings xviii. 9, 10, 13). The train of thought is not difficult to trace. The Prophet turning from besieged, or threatened, Samaria, asks whether Jerusalem deserves a better fate. The war-like spirit of the king, who "rebelled and served not," accompanied by preparations for defence (Isaiah xix. 8—13) promised well. Something however in the worldly policy and self-confident tone of the preparations jarred on the Prophet's mind. He would have had prayer, soberness of life, unbounded trust in the majesty of Jehovah, resorted to by the people of the city of peace. Whereas the rough soldiery, or their leaders, without whose instrumentality no war could be carried on, could ill brook interference, as if with infants weaned from the breasts. It is the old quarrel between the unseen and the seen, faith and flesh, the prophet and the soldier, the preaching Covenanter and counselling Cromwell, the simplicity which asks for prayers against cholera, and the statesmanship which recommends the removal of dirt. We cannot deny a side and a sphere, within whose limits the wisdom of this world is justified,

XXIV.

1. Woe to the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim,[4] and the fading flower of his exceeding beauty; *to them* that are on the head of the valley of olives,[5] *that are* smitten with wine.

2. Behold the Lord has a mighty and strong one, like the flood of hail of a destroying storm, like a flood of mighty waters overflowing,

[6] Out of many grammatical combinations possible in this verse, the Vulgate for the latter part points to the best: "qui erant in vertice vallis pinguissimæ, errantes a vino."

[5] *Valley of olives*; or, valley of fatness.

since God has made action the condition of temporal salvation. Again, there is a limit to earthly resources, at the end of which the boundless might of faith is shewn in a trust which refuses to despair, in a courage which multiplies means as if it could create; at worst, in a meekness which adores the will of God. So not the vaunting soldiery, but Isaiah was justified by the failure of Sennacherib. If to such general observations we add the directness of invocation with which the genius of the East brings Deity into sight, disdaining our patient elaboration of intermediate causes, we shall enter fully into the spirit of this group of chapters, and sympathise with the earnest Prophet, without thinking it necessary to imagine his opponents such monsters of impiety, or so bereft of natural feeling, as a one-sided treatment of these sacred records is apt to bewilder us by suggesting.

1—4. The painful suspense as to Samaria's fate, which makes Hosea in his last chapter waver between lamentation and trust, has reached a darker stage. Isaiah sees the city of Omri, on her hill which crowned the fat, or olive-planted, vale, drooping. Either the garlands, as some take it, on the heads of the drinkers, or perhaps

3. *He* casts down with hand, *that* they are trampled under feet,[6] the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim,

4. And the fading flower of his exceeding beauty, which *is* on the head of the valley of olives, shall be as a tender fig before the summer, which he that seeth it seeth, and while yet it is in his hand, he devours it.

5. In that day will the ETERNAL of hosts become a crown of glory, and a diadem of splendour to the REMNANT of his people,

6. And a spirit of judgment to him that presides in judgment, and valiancy to the turners of battle to the gate.[7]

7. But also these have sinned in wine, and gone astray in strong drink: priest and prophet have sinned in strong drink, are swallowed up of wine, are gone astray of strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

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[6] *They are trampled.* The plural verb, with the singular crown, creates in any combination a difficulty. The close sequence of 'hand' and 'feet' has induced me to alter the punctuation.

[7] *Turners of battle to the gate.* See Judges ix. 35—40.

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only the beauty and splendour, of which flowers are a natural type, and the majesty which the site of the city embodied, fade away.

The conqueror, like a flood, sweeps in, and devours, without asking which is ripe.

5, 6. A firmer trust in God, Hezekiah's faith, and the sanctity of Zion, are better signs for Jerusalem.

7—14. Only alas! the conduct of Jerusalem is no better; her policy as worldly; many of her prophets as courtly and complying; her rulers, *i. e.* her nobles (as distinct from the king), as arrogant, and as given to revelling, as the desperate defenders of falling Samaria.

8. For all tables are full of vomit; filthiness, *so that there is* no place.[8]

9. Whom, *they ask,* will he teach knowledge, and whom will he make understand a message? weanlings from the milk, withdrawn from the breasts?

10. For *it is* stammer on stammer, stammer on stammer, stutter on stutter, stutter on stutter;[9] a little here and a little there.

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[8] This verse in the Hebrew is pointed as one clause.

[9] *Stammer on stammer*, and *stutter on stutter;* or, bidding on bidding, forbid on forbid Vulg. Manda, remanda; Expecta, re-expecta. Gr. θλίψιν and ἐλπίδα, erroneously. The Latin rendering is not amiss, but it is doubtful whether Isaiah meant to put in the drunkards' mouths precise words, or half articulate lispings uttered with the mimetic gesticulation of the South and East, which our colder temperament abhors.

Though children of the East seldom sin so coarsely in drink, as the Teutonic and Scandinavian races, they have not always been free from reproach; and in troubled times danger would plead for license; men who risked their lives would be denied nothing; others who shared with Isaiah the office of prophet, or claimed its name, would share what they could hardly, if they would, restrain. But the impulses of full-blooded, deep-drinking men are ever in antagonism to the pale seriousness, the deep vision, of the seer. "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess," says the Apostle, "but be filled with the spirit;" the two things being antagonists. Isaiah would unroll the scroll of destiny, look into God's counsels, give the Almighty reason to spare, foresee the future by the comparison of what ought to be, with what is; while the easier Prophets (we should say 'Ministers') sympathize with the defenders, who defy the Assyrian, or would treat with him secretly.

10—14. As at the Council of Sens, in 1140, the sober doctrine of Abelard was condemned by Bishops too full of

11. Surely with lispings[1] of lip and with an alien tongue will *God* speak to this people,

12. To whom he said, This is the rest, give rest to the weary, and this is the halting-place ; but they refused[2] to hearken.

13. So becomes to them the word of the ETERNAL, stammer on stammer, stammer on stammer, stutter on stutter, stutter on stutter ;[3] a little here, and a little there ; in order that they may go, and stumble backwards, and be broken, and snared, and captured.

14. Therefore hear the ETERNAL'S word, men of mockery, rulers[4] of this people which is in Jerusalem,

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[1] *Lispings ;* or, lispers.

[2] *Refused.* Hebr. consented not. The final ה of the Hebr. past tense here is called "paragogic"—a form of explaining nothing which lingers in Hebrew Grammars. I suspect it is dialect—an Arabism, if not a Chaldaism.

[3] *Stammer* and *stutter ;* or, bidding and forbidding.

[4] *Rulers ;* or, speakers in proverbs.

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drink to mutter aright *Dam-namus,* so the banqueters mimic the Prophet, either with drunken lisping, unable to repeat his words, or intentionally distorting them—*Tzav Tzav, Kav Kav ;* which, if they mean anything, mean *Bid and Forbid.*

Therefore Isaiah threatens that the strange tongues of invaders shall preach to these men in their own style. The use of this passage by St. Paul to disparage the gift of speaking with tongues in the Churches (1 Cor. xiv. 21) is more remarkable, because the outburst of Pentecost, whether inarticulate with emotion, or confusing by the mixture of every man's own tongue with the hitherto alone consecrated Hebrew, was compared by the by-standers to the effect of wine. Though the Apostle here, as elsewhere, is not acting as an interpreter, but more as we use a mechanical adaptation in sermons, he puts us on a track

15. Since you have said, We have struck a covenant with Death, and made agreement with the Grave ;[5] the overflowing scourge, when it crosses, shall not reach us, for we have made lying our refuge, and in falsehood we are hidden ;

16. Therefore thus saith the Lord, the ETERNAL, Behold it is I that have laid foundation in Zion a stone, a stone of trial,[6] a corner-stone costly, a foundation well-grounded ; he who counteth *me* firm[7] will not hurry ;[8] and I make judgment the line, and righteousness the weight ;

17. But hail shall sweep away the refuge of lying, and waters overflow the hiding-place ; and your covenant

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[5] *Grave ;* or, underworld ; strictly, the Hollow.

[6] Why does *A stone of trial*, or tried, become in 1 Peter ii. 6, a chosen stone ? Probably, because the LXX. read Bchr instead of Bchn, and so translated ἐκλεκτὸν. The change of meaning, however, here is not radical, but may have grown by transition.

[7] *Counteth firm ;* or, believeth, not in the sense of bringing a mental bias to historical research, but in that of steadfastly reposing on the steadfastness of God, as when we trust He will right some great wrong. The root is our *Amen.*

[8] *Will not hurry.* So our present Hebrew, fut. of *Chush ;* but the LXX. translating οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ, may have had before them the fut. of Būsh, to be ashamed. Such a change is not an unlikely one to have originated amidst the impatience of baffled hopes.

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pointing to emotion or freedom, instead of to the theory of languages supernaturally taught.

15. Those who mocked Isaiah, either counselled a league with Egypt, or by fortification and resistance hoped to escape the scourge ; might be ready in a crisis to submit, with tribute and appeasing flattery.

16—18. Nothing but trust in God, answers Isaiah, will avail. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. One only lays abiding stones. As in Matth. xvi. 18, it is disputed whether the rock of the

with death shall be blotted out,[9] and your agreement with the grave shall not stand;

18. When the overflowing scourge crosses, then shall you be to it for a trampling; from the time of its crossing it shall seize you;

19. For morning by morning shall it cross, by day and by night: and only to hear the report shall be terror.[1]

20. For the bed is too short for stretching one's self, and the coverlet too narrow for wrapping one's self.[2]

21. Surely, as in mount Perazim,[3] will the ETERNAL arise; as in the valley of Gibeon, will he be wroth; to

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[9] *Blotted out.* Vulg. Delebitur, here as often the technical word for atonement, *Caphar*, is used in its simplest sense.

[1] *To hear the report shall be a terror;* or, a vexation. Vulg. sola vexatio intellectum dabit auditui. It is a question whether these two verses, 19th and 20th, are not part of the scoff of the mockers, as above in vv. 9—10. If the reader prefers it so, let him change the futures in v. 19, *shall cross*, and *shall be*, into the present, crosses, and is.

[2] Quam fœda proclivitas detorquendi omnia apud Rabbinas dominetur, h. l. apparet, cum sermonem de adultero cui unà cum marito non sufficiat lectus, finxerint.

[3] *Mount Perazim*, of breaches. LXX. ἀσεβῶν, but the allusion is to 2nd Sam. v. 20, where the Philistines were beaten. For Gibeon, see the same chapter, or Joshua x.

Church is (*a*) Christ, or (*b*) in a secondary sense, Peter, or (*c*) the faith of Peter just confessed; so here it is disputable, what is the stone laid by God? Is it the maxim of faith which follows? I think not. The more generally we take the words the better. There might be reference to Hezekiah, but hardly apparent.

19, 20. Either it is a vexation to hear Isaiah daily, as the scornful men said; or the scourge will be terrible in reality and report. So, either patience does not suffice for such lecturing; or gravely, all resources will be inadequate.

do his work, his work *is* strange; and to accomplish his deed, his deed *is* awful.[4]

22. Now, therefore, be not mockers, lest your bonds be grievous: for a concluded *thing* and a determined, upon all the land, have I heard from the Lord, the ETERNAL of hosts.[5]

23. Give ear, and hearken to my voice; attend, and listen to my speech,

24. Does the plougher plough all day? For sowing[6] he lays open and harrows his ground.

25. Does he not, when he has levelled its face, then scatter the vetch,[7] and sow cummin, and lay wheat in a row,[8] and barley marked,[9] and spelt[1] in its border?

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[4] *Awful.* Heb. foreign. [5] Comp. Isaiah x. 19 and 8.

[6] *For sowing.* The Masoretic stop follows these words.

[7] *Vetch.* Heb. Ketzach. Gr. μελάνθιον. Lat. nigella; or, Vulg. *Gith.* Pliny says, H. N. xx. 17. 71. Gith ex Græcis alii melanthion, alii melanspermon vocant. Hence we might translate it 'blackseed:' some have called it the caraway, I know not whether rightly. The cummin is better known, tithed in Christ's time: used by the Latins to cause paleness.

[8] *Wheat in a row;* or, the prime wheat: or, less probably some, the fenced wheat. Vulg. per ordinem.

[9] *Marked, i.e.* in its place, or by its kind. [1] *Spelt;* or, rye.

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22. The traces of Isaiah, which for three chapters we had missed, are plain in this verse.

23—29. The closing six verses are in many ways peculiar. Supposing them to belong to this place, they seem to be a parable, in which the ploughman and thresher's dealings with various grains are made to represent God's dealings with his people.

As flail or staff suffices for lighter pulse, but wain and oxen are used for heavier grain, yet this is not bruised for ever, so God apportions his judgments by fitness and measure. Though parables are neither demonstration, nor

26. And his God instructs him to discretion, and teaches him.

27. For the vetch is not threshed with a threshing-drag, nor the wheel of a waggon turned round upon the cummin; but the vetch is beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod; *and* the bread *corn* is threshed.[2]

28. Surely he will not for ever continue threshing; nor vex *it with* the wheel of his waggon, nor bruise it with his horses' hoofs.[3]

29. Even this came forth from the ETERNAL of hosts, who makes counsel wonderful, and salvation[4] great.

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[2] *And the bread-corn.* Heb. bread. Vulg. Panis autem . . . from which I follow Lowth in concluding the ו conjunction to have been lost out of the text; by restoring it, we make the rhythm more probable.

[3] *Horses' hoofs.* Vulg. ungulis. "Semel dicitur de equis triturantibus, sed etiam his insidet eques." Ges.

[4] *Salvation;* or, wisdom. Comp. Micah v. 9.

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substitutes for physical science, they illustrate things to our feelings.

29. One of the fundamental differences between the larger Gentile mode of viewing Nature, and that which the strictest construction of Genesis forces upon us, would be that labour is according to the one the design of Providence and a blessing, while the other calls it a curse. We may subordinate the Gentile view to an antecedent hypothesis of Man's need of discipline, or may soften the Hebrew view into something relative and emotional. In either case, we find an universal consent of nations that God under some name, or by some manner, taught men agriculture, and every art. Since we have no Gods but One, and since His Spirit, not superseding his providential instrumentalities, is that by which He teaches men, we are brought back to Inspiration in some sense, and with whatever limits, as the Source of our knowledge of things human and divine. Comp. Lowth here.

XXV.

1. Oh, Altar of God,[5] God's altar, city where David dwelt;[6] add year upon year, let solemnities go their round.[7]

2. When I distress God's altar, so that there is heaviness and sorrow, yet it shall be to me as the altar of God.

3. When I encamp all round against thee, and embattle against thee mound, and raise against thee towers,

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[5] *Altar of God*, as in Ezek. xliii. 16; or, *lion of God*, as the two lion-like men of Moab, in 2 Sam. xxiii. 20. Comp. Isaiah xxviii. 7. Vulg and LXX. *Ariel*, as the Hebrew. Some, *Mount of God*. Grotius seems first among moderns to have followed those ancients, ("alii arbitrantur," says Jerome,) who preferred the sense of Altar, which, since confirmed from the Arabic, is now adopted by most critics, from Rosenmüller to Knobel.

[6] *Dwelt;* or, besieged. Vulg. expugnavit. But David's capture of Jerusalem is not here an appropriate allusion; and it is one of the many signs of traditional truth in the earlier narrative, that the words *encamp, encampment, &c.* are used Biblically in the sense of dwelling.

[7] *Go their round;* or, be slain, in which case, the word *solemnities* will be rendered *sacrifices*.

This chapter is conjecturally dated a few years later than the preceding, and supposed to refer to the preparations against Sennacherib, instead of to the dread of Shalmaneser. There is hardly a fundamental difference of topic; but such a loose connexion as the Prophet himself might give, in arranging poetically the recollections of his many struggles, or such as might induce an early editor to group together kindred, though distinct, outpourings of the spirit of faith and warning.

1, 2. Sad as the contrast seemed between recurrent solemnities within, and dangers without, Jehovah must still look favourably on the place where sacrifices go up in His name. It is conjectured this may have been written in view of a Passover, commencing the year.

3—5. When humiliation comes, the secular defences in

4. When thou art fallen low, and speakest out of the ground, and thy speech is low out of the dust; yea, *when* thy voice is like a juggler[8] out of the earth, and thy speech twittering[9] out of the dust,

5. Then shall the multitude of thy strangers be like fine dust, and the multitude of the violent ones pass away as chaff,[1]

6. And it shall be at an instant[2] suddenly, thou shalt be visited[3] from the ETERNAL of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and a mighty voice; with storm and tempest and a flame of fire devouring,

7. And the multitude of all the nations that war against the Altar of God, and all that encamp against her and her fortification, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision;

8. And it shall be as when the hungry man dreams, and

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[8] *Juggler.* Heb. *Oub.* Gr. ἐγγαστρίμυθος, in Isaiah viii. 13, where see Note; but here ὀι φωνοῦντες ἐκ τῆς γῆς.

[9] *Twittering.* See Isaiah viii. 13, and x. 11.

[1] *Pass away, as chaff;* or, as driving chaff.

[2] *At an instant.* The Hebrew wrongly punctuates these words into the preceding verse.

[3] *Thou shalt be visited;* or, there shall be a visitation. Vulg. visitabitur. So most critics, hardly with reason: for, if the Prophet had meant that, he would have written יִפָּקֵד.

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which politicians trusted, whether chariots from Egypt (2 Kings xviii. 24) or hired soldiers, like the Cretans and Philistines of David, or alliances secretly contrived with the invader, will be as chaff before the storm.

6. The visitation of deliverance must come from God, who (7) will sweep away the invader, whether averting Shalmaneser, or overthrowing Sennacherib.

8. Jerusalem is not, like Samaria, a fig ripe for devouring, but those who intend it so are dreaming.

behold he is eating, but he awakes, and his soul is empty; or as when the thirsty man dreams, and behold he is drinking, but he awakes, and behold he is faint, and his soul is longing; so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that war against mount Zion.

9. Stand halting, and be amazed; blind yourselves,[4] and stare blindly; be drunken, but not with wine; stagger,[5] but not with strong drink.

10. For the ETERNAL has poured upon you a spirit of heavy sleep, and has closed your eyes; he has covered the prophets and your rulers [the seers].[6]

11. And vision altogether[7] is become to you as the words of a writing that is sealed, which they deliver to one who understands writing, saying, Read this, I pray; and he says, I cannot, because it is sealed;

12. And the writing is delivered to one that understands not writing, saying, Read this, I pray; and he says, I understand not writing:

13. And the Lord saith, Whereas this people draw nigh

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[4] *Blind yourselves.* Comp. ch. vi. 10.

[5] *Be drunken, and stagger.* Masora, they are drunken, and they stagger; which all the critics follow; but the Vulgate, '*inebriamini*, et non a vino; *movemini*, et non ab ebrietate,' seems truer to the sequence of thought.

[6] It has been suggested that either the prophets or the seers, or even both, have an air of redundancy, implying an ancient gloss. We may understand 'the seers' however, as those who profess to see, and render it, those who see visions.

[7] *Altogether.* Hebr. the whole.

9—12. Since the revellers despised Isaiah's sober warnings, with their cries *Kav, Kav,* God will send them the wineless drunkenness of panic, reeling of brain, and heaviness of torpor; their attempts to decypher the course of events and God's warnings, being helpless as a man

with their mouth, and honour me with their lips, while their heart is far from me, and their fear of me is an injunction of men,[8] made a lesson,

14. Therefore, behold me proceeding to work wonder with this people; to work wonder and a marvel; so that the wisdom of their wise *men* perish and the understanding of their intelligent *men* hide itself.

15. Woe to those that deepen depth beyond the ETEENAL to hide counsel, and that their work may be[9] in a dark place; and who say, Who sees us, and who knows us?

16. Your perversion *it is*[1] if the potter be counted as clay; that the work says to its worker, He made me not; and the form says to its former, He had no understanding.

17. Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon is turned to a fruitful spot, and the fruitful spot[2] is counted for a forest?

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[8] *An injunction of men, i.e.* not tradition as opposed to Scripture; nor formal Ecclesiasticism, as opposed to fresh inspiration and simple piety; but a courtly homage taking the form of religious worship, when the court had become religious.

[9] *That their work may be;* or, and their work is.

[1] *Your perversion it is.* The Hebrew accents make a pause at the word perversion, and join potter with clay; as A. V. the potter's clay; but the verse permits a variety of renderings, with little variation of meaning.

[2] *Fruitful spot.* Hebr. Carmel.

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gazing on a sealed letter, or an illiterate barbarian handling a document.

13—16. God does not value the official piety of courtiers; nor shape His world by their maxims; nor bless their secret plots, nor count their estimate of themselves as the moulders of the nation as any thing better than a turning of things upside down.

17. It is a deeper and more mysterious power than

18. So that in that day the deaf hear the words of *the* writing, and the eyes of the blind see out of obscurity and out of darkness;

19. And the feeble increase gladness in the ETERNAL, and the needy amongst men[3] exult in the Holy One of Israel;

20. Because the terrible comes to an end, and the scorner is consumed, and all watchers over wrong are cut off,

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[3] *Needy amongst men.* So Gesenius takes Hosea xi. 15, as men that sacrifice. I have taken it as sacrificers of men.

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man's which will make Lebanon and Carmel change places, make the wild forest fruitful, the garden barren, Assyria humble, Jerusalem triumphant.

18. Events will make Isaiah's preaching no more a sealed letter to the deaf in heart and blind in understanding. Comp. Isaiah viii. 11—14. This may be one of few passages (three or four in the Old, one in the New Test.), which seem as if God had interposed between himself and mankind the mediatorship of a Book, as the transcript of His infinite mind. A closer observation of the context shews the Prophet's actual warning to be the thing intended. By this remark I do not mean to disparage the instrumental value of a sacred record, still less the Divine origin of the truths and experiences embodied in it; but our experience of the same truths is in no way dependent upon the human limitations of those who formerly felt them; nor should we suffer the book to become a veil between ourselves and God.

19, 20. The hopes of religious people will come out right, and turbulent partisans come to an end; whether the latter silence the Prophet as Amaziah silenced Amos, and as Jehoiakim put to death Uriah (Jer. xxvi.), or whether they warp the course of justice by faction, with trickery.

21. That make a man guilty[4] for pleading, and lay snare for a reprover in the gate, and turn aside with hollowness the righteous.

22. Therefore thus saith to the house of Jacob the ETERNAL, who redeemed Abraham, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither now shall his face grow pale ;

23.[5] But on his seeing his children, the work of my hands, in his midst, they shall hallow my name, and hallow the Holy One of Jacob, and count the God of Israel dread.

24. Then the wanderers in spirit shall know wisdom, and murmurers learn instruction.

XXVI.

1. Oh ! sons that go astray, is the ETERNAL's saying, to work counsel, but not of me; and to pour an out-

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[4] *Make a man guilty for pleading ;* or, count a man an offender for a word ; *i. e.* for a wholesome rebuke. The weight of critical authority is in favour of allusion to lawsuits, taking the gate as the place of pleading ; although the parallel in Amos iv. 7—10, goes to justify the A. V. which I prefer, only the word is not one of heresy, but of honest rebuke. Some understand *make guilty* in the sense of seduce, or lead astray ; but this suits the context less.

[5] In this verse Bp. Lowth proposes two emendations, which more sober critics reject as needless. I mention this for those who think foreign criticism rasher than our own.

[6] *Instruction.* Hebr. *Lekach*, an attraction, philtre, lore ; possibly the germ of the N. T. tradition, as precept.

21—23. Decayed as the nation seems, God can raise up a better generation, such as Isaiah hoped in his own children, and saw exemplified in Hezekiah. Such a remnant it is in the power of God to multiply. The vein of thought is as in ch. i. compared with ch. vii. viii. ix. xi.

1—4. As the last king of Ephraim, the ill-fated Hosea, had only provoked his fall by aiming at Egypt's support against Assyria, so perhaps during the dangerous

pouring,[7] but not my breathing, in order to add sin upon sin;

2. Who go on the way down[8] into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt;

3. Therefore the strength of Pharaoh becomes[9] to you shame, and trusting in the shadow of Egypt a confusion;

4. For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came as far as[1] Hanes.

5. Every one was ashamed over a people that could not advantage them; that could be no help and no advantage, but a shame, yea, a reproach.

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[7] *Pour an outpouring.* Not cover a covering; nor weave a web, in the sense of begin a plot; nor pour libations of treaty, though that sense has some likelihood; but to diffuse the spirit of error, or evil impulse, which Jehovah is described as pouring upon them as a penalty, (see above xxv. 9, 10), or which they waywardly opposed to His true spirit.

[8] *On the way down.* Hebr. to descend.

[9] *Therefore becomes;* or, so that it becomes.

[1] *Came as far as.* Hebr. reached to. Instead of getting a treaty fixed at Zoan, or Tanis, in the North, a comparatively little journey from the frontier, the unfortunate Jews had to carry their presents and solicitations down to Hanes, the Greek Heracleopolis, the modern Ahnas. The town mentioned by Jer. xliii. 7, Tahpanes, would be much nearer Zoan and Pelusium, but was an entirely different place.

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proximity of Shalmaneser, certainly upon the approach of Sennacherib, there was a party in Jerusalem, who against Isaiah's counsel wished for treaty with Egypt.

Ambassadors, whose departure may have been concealed from the religious patriots represented by the Prophet, went not only to Tanis, but as far south as Hanes, carrying presents, the instruments of Eastern diplomacy. Isaiah, as soon as he heard of this, foresaw no good would come of it.

5. Disappointments, not unlike those wont to attend negotiations between the Scotch and their occasional allies

6. In a land of trouble[2] and distress, whence the roaring lion and the strong lion, the viper, and the winged serpent, they carry upon the shoulders of young asses their wealth, and upon the humps of camels their treasures, to a people *that* will be no advantage.

7. For the Egyptians will help in vain, and to no purpose; therefore I cried to this [*Egypt, her name is*] Haughtiness;[3] *and to* them, Be still.

8. Now go, write it with them on a tablet, and engrave it on a record,[4] that it may be for a day hereafter, for ever and for ever,

9. That this is a rebellious people, sons given to lying, sons that refuse to hear the lore of the ETERNAL;

10. Who say to the seers, you shall not see; and to the beholders of vision,[5] you shall not have visions for us of

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[2] *In a land of trouble, &c.* Before these words the Hebrew text has "*The burden of the beasts of the south,*" which is evidently a marginal title crept in from some early editor, and in this case by a striking mistake; he saw a description of the beasts carrying the ambassadors' treasures, and fancying it must be a prediction, gave it as a title "*An utterance on the beasts of the south.*" How late such an error must have arisen, and how far it implies similar liberty in inserting other titles, where the error is not so obvious, I dare not conjecture.

[3] *Haughtiness.* Hebr. *Rahab*, a poetical name of Egypt, as in Psalms lxxxvii. 4, and lxxxix. 10, but here used as in the phrase 'proud helpers,' Job ix. 13, with stress on the sense of pride. The verse obscure from brevity presents a knot, which may be untied or cut, by carrying on the verb and preposition of the penultimate clause to the unsupported pronoun of the last clause.

[4] *Record*; or, book.

[5] *To the beholders of vision.* LXX. τοῖς τὰ ὁράματα ὁρῶσιν. So far right, for Hebr. part. of *Chazah*; but τὸ λόγιον just below probably an error for τὸν ἅγιον.

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in France, befell the embassy. Egypt, with hollow haughtiness, too well merited her old name Rahab.

8—11. The Prophet paints vividly the secular policy,

uprightness;[6] speak to us smoothness: have visions of pleasantness;

11. Turn out of the way, lead aside from the path; cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.

12. Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because of your rejecting[7] this word, and you have trusted in oppression and perverseness, and lean yourselves thereon,

13. Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a falling breach, swollen in a high wall, whose crash comes suddenly at an instant;

14. And he will shiver it,[8] as the shivering of a potter's vessel that is shattered; he will have no pity; so that there shall not be found in its shattering a fragment to hold fire from the hearth, or to draw water from the well.

15. For thus saith the Lord, the ETERNAL, the Holy One of Israel, In returning[9] and rest be saved, in quietness and in confidence be your strength:[1]

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[6] *Uprightness; smoothness; pleasantness.* In Hebrew these are plurals.

[7] *Rejecting.* Heb. *Maas*, the word whence we derive reprobation; when we reject God's teaching, He rejects us as refuse.

[8] *And he will shiver it;* or, and its crash shall be. LXX. τὸ πτῶμα αὐτῆς ἔσται.

[9] *Returning* is more like Isaiah than the also possible sense of *sitting still.*

[1] *Strength.* Heb. *mightiness*, or *valiancy*, the truest might and valour being trust in God.

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ill regulated lives, and contempt of religious counsel, which marked his opponents; and, 12—14, threatens a crash of ruin as the result which Providence would bring out of such plans and thoughts.

15. Sitting still, *i.e.* patience, or returning, *i.e.* repentance, and trust in God are our best weapons. These words often in our own prolonged anxieties, not least when we fret to free ourselves from unjust aspersions, should be our strength.

16. And you would not, but said, Nay: for we will flee[2] upon horses; therefore you shall flee: and we will ride upon the swift; therefore shall your pursuers be swift.

17. You shall flee, a thousand at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five [*ten thousand*[3]]; until you are left as a beacon on the mountain's top, and as an ensign on the hill.

18. And therefore will the ETERNAL wait, to be gracious to you, and therefore exalt[4] himself, to have compassion on you; for the ETERNAL is a God of judgment; blessings *are with* all that wait for Him.

19. For the people shall dwell at Zion in Jerusalem; thou shalt not continue weeping; he will be very gracious to thee at the voice of thy cry; on his hearing it, he answers thee.

20. And *if* the Lord gives you the bread of distress and

[2] *Flee*; or, hasten. [3] *Ten thousand*, comp. Deut. xxxii. 30.

[4] For *exalt himself*, ירום, a probable conjecture of Lowth's and Ewald's, with hardly a change of letter, gives, ידום, *be silent*.

16. The Jews, like ourselves, saw little help but for those who help themselves; haste provoking hasty retort; or flight destined to be prolonged beyond their wish to flee. The horse, an emblem of strength, and ministering to pride or war, was procurable from Egypt. But, as now Mahometans regard the use of horses with jealousy, and even Plato is said (Diog. Laert.) to have blamed ἱπποτυφία, pride of horse, so the Prophets looked back fondly to simpler days, when the Judges rode white asses, or travelled, like Samuel, on foot. 17—19. But when secular pride has failed, God's infinite patience will shew itself in mercy; dry his people's tears; establish them in secure homes.

20, 21. At least no such cruelty as that of king Ma-

water of affliction, yet thy teachers shall *no* more cover themselves,[5] but thine eyes shall look upon thy teachers,

21. And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk in it, when you turn to the right hand,[6] and when you turn to the left;

22. And you shall defile the covering, *each* of thy silver graven-images, and the gilding of thy golden molten-images; thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say to it, Be gone.

23. And he shall give the rain of thy seed, wherewith thou sowest the ground, and bread of the produce of the earth, that it may be fat and plenteous; thy cattle shall feed in that day in large pastures;[7]

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[5] *Cover themselves;* or, be removed.

[6] *Turn to the right hand.* Heb. תאמינו, as if from *Aman*, to be firm, but with the sense of ימן *Yaman*, to be on the right hand. This is one of the anomalies of Hebrew, explicable perhaps by variation of dialect, or permutability of letters and sounds, but in any case a proof of the importance of following the sequence of thought, or idea of the context; since this alone it is which in this passage places the meaning beyond doubt.

[7] *Thy cattle, &c. in a large pasture.* Thy possessions shall feed that day, the lamb at large, and the oxen, &c. So Vulg. agnus spatiose.

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nasseh, or insolence such as that of some of Hezekiah's courtiers (*e.g.* Shebna?) shall silence the prophetic warnings.

21. It is remarkable that Isaiah neither points to any law written at minute length, as the Mosaic, nor yet, like Jeremiah, and perhaps Joel, contemplates the poor and simple as knowing God by the law written in the universal heart, but sets before himself the image of gifted teachers, leading the crowd, reminding them of forgotten duties.

22—26. When a repentant people has thrown away its idols and its sins, the blessings of Heaven will return in

24. And the oxen and the young asses that plough the land shall eat seasoned fodder,[8] which is winnowed with the fan and the shovel;

25. And there shall be upon every high mountain and upon every lofty hill channels running with water,[9] in the falling of the towers;

26. And the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day when the ETERNAL binds up the bruise of his people, and heals the stroke of their wound.

27. Behold the name of the ETERNAL coming from afar, his wrath burning, and utterance[1] grievous; his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire;

28. His breathing *is* as a stream overflowing, that divides even to the neck, to sift nations with the sieve of destruction,[2] and a bridle turning aside in the jaws of populations.

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[8] *Seasoned fodder*; or, salted meal. Vulg. Commixtum migma comedent, sicut in areâ ventilatum est.

[9] *Channels running with water.* Vulg. Rivi currentium aquarum. I should prefer pointing the Heb. verb as a participle.

[1] *Utterance*; or, burden; or, out-flaming, as apparently in Judges xx. 40. Heb. *MassaAh.* Vulg. ad portandum. LXX. λόγιον.

[2] *The sieve of destruction, &c.* Vulg. ad perdendas gentes in nihilum, et frænum erroris [quod erat] in maxillis populorum.

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proportion. God, in whose light we see light, will make the days go brighter in the sense of his favour and peace.

27—30. In words of awful sublimity, such as anguish quickened by faith to daring, or sobered to patience, might have woke from the men of Holland amidst the tortures of Philip 2nd's Inquisition, or such as might save negro outcasts, hunted by bloodhounds, from despair, the

29. The song shall be to you, as in a night when a festival is kept holy; and gladness of heart, as one going with a flute to come to the mount of the ETERNAL, to the Rock of Israel.

30. And the ETERNAL shall cause the majesty of his voice to be heard, and display the lighting down of his arm, with indignation of anger, and flame of devouring fire; whirlwind and storm, and hailstone.

31. For at the voice of the ETERNAL shall the Assyrian be broken; he smites with staff;[3] and it shall be, every passage of the appointed rod, whereon the ETERNAL causes *it* to *rest*, with tabrets and with harps and with battles of shaking[4] shall it be battled therein;

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[3] *He smites with staff;* or, with whom he smites, as with a staff; as above, x. 1. certainly suggests; but the grammar, which governs me, hardly favours that natural repetition of image. This verse may be taken in many ways differing slightly from each other. The Vulg. pavebit Assur, virgâ percussus, implies different pointing. I understand *passage* as the place of the scourge, or flood's, crossing, and the want of a verb for tabrets and harps, makes me carry them on to the next. If the fem. gen. of בָּהּ be an objection to this, it applies equally to other ways.

[4] *Battles of shaking*, are with most, violent, or destructive, battles, as with the sieve of destruction. I suspect the allusion is rather to waving sacrificial censers, as if this battle should be one of priests, not soldiers. Comp. 2 Chron. xx. 17—22.

Prophet paints the retribution of God, tarrying, yet at length coming, and giving the sufferers a new song, as in the night of the Paschal lamb slain, and teaching the oppressors to know themselves men. Man's anger, orator's eloquent lip, flood, storm, thunder, and the process of sifting with a sieve, supply the images.

31. Jehovah's voice might be translated his thunder. The rod may be the Assyrian, or that which the Almighty waves in turn over him, after using him as a scourge. The 'passage' may be the brandishing of the

32. For the burning-place[5] is long ago prepared; yea, also for the king it is fixed; *they* have made deep and wide its circle; fire and wood abundantly; the breath of the ETERNAL, like a stream of brimstone, kindles therein.

XXVII.

1. Oh they that go down to Egypt for help, and that lean on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but look not to the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the ETERNAL!

[5] *Burning-place;* or, refuse-hole. Hebr. Topheth in an elongated form. The Valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem (whence N. T. Gehenna), in which the bodies of criminals were burnt, and in times of relapse, the old Canaanite custom of offerings by fire to Moloch revived; here used as a figure for the place of ruin of the Assyrian host, as an offering to Jehovah's vengeance.

staff from Heaven, greeted with acclamations from outraged earth; or better, it may be each spot trodden by the Assyrian, and by avenger overtaking him. The battles are either destructive, as with a sieve sifting out human lives; or mysteriously solemn, as the work of Providence wielding the earthquake and simoom, and needing from those who are redressed nothing but songs and offering of trust in God If the latter may be followed, the battle of Jehoshaphat with the Ammonites, and that of the Britons supposed at Maes-Garmon (or St. Germains), may be an illustration.

32. When the Assyrian falls, he and his army will be such an offering to Jehovah, as may be compared to the burning of criminals, or slaughter before Moloch. The word '*ordained,*' in the A. V. of this verse, seems used for *ordered,* or arranged.

1. This chapter continues the subject, with transition to invective against opponents in Jerusalem, and to rebuke

2. Surely He too is wise, and will make evil come, and not call back his words; but arise against the house of evil-doers, and against the help of the workers of iniquity.

3. As the Egyptians are man, and not god;[6] and their horses flesh, and not spirit; so the ETERNAL stretches out his hand, and the helper stumbles, and the holpen falls, and all of them together come to an end.

4.[7] For thus spake the ETERNAL to me, As the lion roars,

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[6] *God.* Hebr. *El*, a word of which it is doubted, whether the primary meaning imply divinity, or might. I believe the latter, and that it is distinct from *Elohim*, the Worshipful, or Awful. Here, from the antithesis to Man, it is natural to suppose Deity the idea implied, either in the higher sense of Deus, or the lower of Divus. But the common phrase *Le-ēl-Yādi*, in the power of my hand, is conclusive against the universality of this usage. It is more worthy of remark, that *Ruach*, breathing, or spirit, here denotes supernatural substance.

[7] My change of the interpunctuation, and reasons for it, will occur to the reader. In verse 5, *Passing-over* is the Hebr. *Pasach*, the word for Passover. In verse 6, I think the revolters meant are the negotiators with Egypt.

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of women's luxurious security; deliverance being promised upon condition of a simpler faith and soberer life.

2. If the Egyptians are wise, Jehovah is more so, and (3) not men, as they are. Incidentally Isaiah's use of the word *spirit* is a help against temptations to regard the basis of the Old Testament as altogether materialistic; so it prepares us for Christ's doctrine, that not only God is spirit, but we ourselves, risen out of death, are spiritual, as are the angels. This again is confirmed by St. Paul's saying, we 'sow not that body which shall be,' and by that strong perception of the spirituality of the Highest Being, which we have inherited from our insular forefathers, and found confirmed by the noblest thinkers of Greece and India.

4. As Homer describes the lion at bay over his booty, and (5) as the Gospel represents Christ comparing his affec-

and the young lion, upon his prey, against whom a multitude of shepherds shouts; he is not daunted at their voice, nor abases himself at their tumult;

5. So will the ETERNAL of hosts descend, to encamp upon Zion's mount; and upon her hill, as birds hovering, so will the ETERNAL of hosts throw a shelter over Jerusalem; with sheltering will he deliver, and with passing over, rescue.

6. Return unto Him against whom *they* have revolted deeply, [O] sons of Israel.

7. For in that day when they cast away each man his idols of silver and his idols of gold which your hands have made for you to sin,

8. Then shall the Assyrian fall by the sword of no mighty man, and the sword of no humble man shall devour him; but he shall flee, not[8] before the sword, and his choice warriors shall melt away;

9. And he shall pass by [*Jehovah*] his rock with fear, and his princes be terrified at the ensign [*of Jehovah*],

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[8] *Not.* Hebr. לֹ֫, as if for לֹא, which one MS. reads. The sequence of thought is faithfully given by *Vulg.* fugiet non a facie gladii, and LXX. *οὐκ ἀπὸ προσώπου μαχάιρας.* In the phrase *Jehovah's rock*, the English idiom does not so kindly as the Hebrew permit us to wait for the noun supplied in the second clause. But by all means compare above xxv. 1, xxvi. 17, and below xxxii. 34.

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tion to that of a bird sheltering her young, so will Jehovah shelter those who return (8, 9) from idolatry, and (8) by his supernatural Providence bring the Assyrian to an end.

9. So Zion, God's altar, will be saved by him for his servant David's sake, and the banner which he holds over his returning people will terrify the invader. See marg. ref.

is the saying of the ETERNAL, whose fire is in Zion, and whose furnace in Jerusalem.

10. Lo! for righteousness reigns a king; and for princes, in judgment they bear rule:

11. So that each one is as a sheltering-place from the wind, and a cover from the tempest; as streams of waters in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land:

12. And the eyes of seers are no longer blind, and the ears of hearers attend, and the heart of the rash understands to learn, and the tongue of lispers is ready to speak plainly.

13. The churl[9] shall no more be called noble;[1] nor the cunning called prosperous;[2] because the churl speaks churlishness, and his heart works iniquity; to work profaneness, and to speak wickedness against the Eternal; to leave empty the soul of the hungry, and that he may make the drink of the thirsty fail;

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[9] *Churl.* Hebr. Nabal; the same as David's wealthy churl.
[1] *Noble,* or liberal, or princely, in the sense of generous. Hebr. *Nadiv.*
[2] *Prosperous;* or, bountiful.

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10. Hezekiah's happy reign will then justify his nobler counsellors, each one of whom will be, (11) like the 'rocky shade' of Hesiod and Virgil (πετραίη σκιή, and saxea umbra,) a shelter instead of a tyrant. (12) Men will then attend to Isaiah, instead of mocking him, as the stammerers and lispers had done over their wine.

13. As Thucydides complains that in the strife of factions the natural names of things became inverted; or as Horace laughs at men for giving to personal characteristics the colour of their own humour; but especially as

14. And the cunning, whose instruments are evil; he plans devices to destroy the humble[3] with words of falsehood, when the poor *man* is speaking judgment.

15. But the noble plans nobleness;[4] and upon nobleness he stands.

16. Rise up, women that are at ease, hear my voice; careless[5] daughters, give ear to my speech.

17. Days beyond a year shall you be troubled, careless ones; because the vintage fails, the gathering does not come.

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[3] *Humble*; or, needy. The distinction between two forms עָנִי, and עָנִי, as humble and needy, may be doubted.

[4] *Nobleness*, or princeliness, or generosity. Hebr. plur. This verse may be strictly the ending of a piece; and the next commence a fresh piece; but the transition, if there be one, is not utter, or violent.

[5] *Careless*, as in A. V. in the sense of uncaring; Lat. securæ.

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we see in Church politics the name and penalty of error given often to the truer side, and disguise called reticence or reverence; so Isaiah wishes cunning no more to pass for wisdom, nor selfish adventurers to have the power of oppression. 15. How far what we should call a political view comes in, and whether birth and rank are intended (as the Greek said, Masters of long descended wealth are gentlest,) or whether moral qualities only are dwelt on, is not quite certain.

16, 17. It is not quite impossible that, as Jewish interpreters characteristically contend, the cities of Judæa are intended by the un-anxious daughters; but it is more reasonable to suppose Isaiah meaning what he says. The immense influence of women for evil or good, as witnessed in denunciations of them by Amos and Isaiah, and in their ministering of their substance to Christ, as again in their suffering themselves to be stirred up by the Jews to

18. Be disturbed, you that are at ease; be troubled, careless ones; stripping, and baring, and girding upon loins, upon breasts that mourn;[6]

19. Over pleasant fields, over fruitful vine, over the soil of my people, thorn and briar goes up; yea[7] over all the houses of joy in the joyous city;

20. For palace is forsaken, multitudinous city deserted; fortress[8] and tower have become in the stead of caves for ever, a haunt of wild asses, a pasture of flocks;

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[6] *Upon breasts that mourn, &c.* LXX. ἐπὶ τῶν μαστῶν κόπτεσθε, ἀπὸ ἀγροῦ ἐπιθυμήματος. *Vulg.* Super ubera plangite, super regione desiderabili. For *breasts*, a various reading is *fields*; mentioned, but not adopted by Lowth, though foreign critics, perhaps from his habit of altering, ascribe it to him. The careful reader, even in English, of vv. 18, 19, being told that the Hebrew for *upon* and *over* is the same word, will understand why critics here give different punctuations. Neither my own, nor any which I have seen, quite satisfies me.

[7] *Yea.* Hebr. כִּי. *Vulg.* quanto magis. Some with needless ingenuity turn it into a noun; scorching, or a nettle; as with more reason, but even there needlessly, in ch. iv. (A. V. iii. 24).

[8] *Fortress.* Hebr. Ophel, a local name, as in Micah iii. 16 (A. V. iv. 8), and Nehem. iii. 26.

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persecute St. Paul (which he never forgot,) renders the Prophet's appeal natural. As Christ, on his way to death, bade the daughters of Jerusalem weep the future, so Isaiah here adapts to women what he had already said to men.

18, 19. It is not clear with what word the objects of girding on sackcloth end, and the subjects of mourning begin; whether thorn and briar apply to all the second verse, and sackcloth to all the first. The *Yea*, which might be rendered *For*, is perhaps misplaced in the text.

20. The ruin which luxurious dames so little dread will not be averted, until (21) a better spirit, the gift of God, but seconded by human repentance, give reason for

21. Until upon us be poured a breathing from on high, and the wilderness become a Carmel,[9] and the Carmel be counted a forest; till judgment dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the Carmel:

22.[1] So shall the work of righteousness be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever.

23. So my people shall dwell in a habitation of peace, and in secure dwellings, and in careless resting-places,[2]

24. Though it hail in the sinking of the forest, and on the flat the city be laid low,

25. Blessings are with you, sowers by all waters, sending forth foot of ox and ass *freely*.

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9 *Carmel;* or, fruitful field, as above, xxv. 17.

1 Comp. xxvi, 15. No one with the least critical discernment can compare this group of chapters, xxiv.—xxviii. (A. V. xxviii–xxxiii.) with the earlier chapters of the book, i.—xi., and not observe in them the identical ing of the same writer; or again compare with them another group, xxi.—xxiii. (A. V. xxiv—xxvii.) without becoming sensible of a difference of style, betokening a different author.

2 *Careless, i.e.* secure, in a good sense, as tranquil; but with reference to vv. 16—18.

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abasing the mighty and exalting the meek; then with the returning which God enjoins (22) will be found the peace which He gives. Comp. Notes on ch. i. iv.

So whatever calamities befall the mighty in general, (24) or Nineveh in particular, peace (23) will be the portion of those who without ambition serve God, while (25) they enjoy without danger the freedom of a rural and pastoral life. Although in this chapter the scenery is local, and the presentiment temporal, the impulse described as 'breathing' in ver. 21, is a spiritual gift to men's minds, and not a mere breeze of secular prosperity.

XXVIII.

1. Oh! thou that spoilest, when thou wast not spoiled; and plunderest, though they plundered[3] not thee; when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; when thou hast done plundering, they shall plunder thee.

2. ETERNAL, be gracious to us; for thee have we waited; be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in time of distress.

3. At the voice of tumult populations fled; at thy lifting up thyself nations were scattered:

4. So that your spoil was gathered,[4] as the gathering of the locusts; like the rush of swarms of locusts, was each one rushing upon it.

5. The ETERNAL is exalted, for he dwells on high; he has filled Zion with judgment and righteousness:

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[3] *Plundered;* or, betrayed.

[4] *Was gathered.* If it is asked, why I translate this præterite form as a past; though præterites with a conjunction elsewhere as futures, I answer, because it is conjoined to præterites which have preceded, and therefore continues their time.

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1. This chapter continues the subject, but has an appearance of being written in celebration of Sennacherib's failure, as a poem upon the event. Hence it has not such direct exhortation as Deborah, *e.g.* addressed to Barak, Judges iv. 6, but imagery such as in Deborah's song, Judges v. The Assyrian is denounced; the Prophet, mediating for his people, (2) turns to God; the effect of the Providential interposition (3) is sketched; and the spoiling, as I think, (4) of the Assyrian camp. Comp. 2 Kings vii. 16. The true sources of Zion's strength (5, 6) are indicated, and (7, 9) the piteous anxiety of the past crisis described.

6. Therefore abundance of salvation is the security of thy times; wisdom and knowledge of the fear of the ETERNAL, that is his treasure.

7. Behold, they of God's altar[5] cried without; bitterly wept the ambassadors for peace.

8. The highways[6] were desolated; the wayfarer ceased; he broke treaty; he rejected cities, he held man of no account.

9. The land mourned and languished; Lebanon grew ashamed and withered; Sharon became as a desert; while Bashan and Carmel tottered.[7]

10.[8] Now will I rise, saith the ETERNAL; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself; you are conceiving chaff; you shall bring forth stubble; your breathing *is* a fire *that* shall devour you; until populations become *as* burnings of lime, *until they* are consumed, as thorns cut down, in the fire.

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[5] *They of God's altar*; or, their valiant ones. Hebr. *Arielim*, or *Areelam*, a word of which we have no certainty. Out of the conjectures, which connect it with *Yara* to fear, *Raah* to see, *Ruhal* to tremble, and *Ariel*, God's breath, or Hero, I prefer with hesitation the first or the last. If the first, it is the Niphal part. from which the two first letters would have been disjoined in חֲרֵן. If, as I think, the last, it is a plural of *Ariel* used in xxv. 1. *Vulg.* Ecce videntes clamabunt foris. LXX. ἐν τῷ φόβῳ ὑμῶν οὗτοι φοβηθήσονται.

[6] *Highways, i.e.* etymologically, causeways; not idiomatically, high roads.

[7] *Tottered*; or, shook off their leaves: as Kimchi, whom the A. V. seems to have followed, as elsewhere I have noticed in our translators an inclination to be guided by him.

[8] I have endeavoured in this verse to shew the connexion of thought; though the Hebrew clauses are more broken.

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10. When there is no other help, God helps; and, by a poetical embodiment of divine things in human conception, is introduced as mocking the invaders' plans, possibly the defenders' weak devices; and (11) exhibiting to nations his power.

11. Hearken, you that are afar, to what I have done; and learn you that are nigh, my might.

12. Sinners in Zion became afraid; trembling took hold of the profane: "Who shall dwell of us with devouring fire? Who shall dwell of us with perpetual burnings?"[9]

13. He who walks righteously, and speaks uprightly; who rejects the spoil of oppressions; who loosens his hands from fastening upon bribe, who stops his ears from hearing of blood, and closes his eyes from looking on evil,

14. He shall dwell in high places; fortresses of rocks shall be his refuge; his bread shall be given largely, his waters unfailing:

15. Thine eyes shall see the king in his majesty; *and* look out on the land of far [*prospects*]; thy heart shall muse on the terror [*past*]: Where is the reckoner;[1] where is the weigher; where the numberer of the towers?

16. Thou seest no *more* the fierce[2] people; a people of

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[9] *Perpetual burnings.* Hebr. *Olam*, for ever; but here used of temporary continuance. Jerome alters *us* into *you* (vobis), so as to make it a Divine threat, instead of a human complaint.

[1] *Where is the reckoner.* Jerome could not refrain from translating this polemically against Mosaic teachers, *Ubi est literatus? ubi legis verba ponderans: ubi doctor parvulorum?* as in 1 Cor. i. 20 (which the Vulgate, printed in Paris, 1851, here appends). Surely a strange perversion; yet not so antagonistic to Christ's Gospel, as binding Mosaic records or law upon Christians.

[2] *Fierce;* or, stammering.

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12. Irreligious courtiers, and secular politicians had been at their wits' end; but (13) righteous life, and trust in God would be justified (14) by the blessing of security, in a day when Judah's (15) king should be no more hampered by intrigues, or ridiculed by foes; but men would look back tranquilly on the past terror.

16. When the strange-tongued men, with whom God

men deeper of lip than thou canst hear, lisping of tongue, beyond[3] understanding.

17. Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a tranquil abode, a tent immovable; whose stakes shall not be plucked up for ever, nor any of its cords be broken.

18. Nay, but there *is* JEHOVAH glorious to us; a place of rivers,[4] of streams of broad extent, wherein shall go no vessel with oars, and stately ship shall not pass thereby.

19. For JEHOVAH is our judge; JEHOVAH is our lawgiver; JEHOVAH is our king; he will be our saviour.

20. Thy tacklings are slackened, that they neither strengthen the hold of the mast, nor spread sail; then is divided abundantly the prey of spoil; the cripples seize the plunder:

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[3] *Beyond.* Heb. *Ayn.* There is not.

[4] *A place of rivers, &c.* These words are commonly joined to Jehovah; but I cannot help thinking better with the local *There.* Jerusalem will be tranquil as some majestic river undisturbed by oar or sail. Evidently the Assyrian invader is suggested by the shadowy image of a great fleet.

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had visited the lisping mockers of Isaiah, are gone, (17) the old city of peace will be as a tent firmly fixed, and (18) as a river unvexed by oar or sail. (19) It is not likely that the place of so many sanctities will be deserted by that eternal King, who is something more than a national God; also a righteous and merciful power.

20. The host which, as a hostile Armada threatening some sacred isle, had lowered round, has suffered shipwreck; its camp is spoiled, even by the outcasts of the people; (Psalm lxviii. 12, 13) and health of body and soul (21) is enjoyed by those who have trusted God; counting Him true. The reader will do well to compare here the 46th, 47th, and 48th Psalms. These, and some others,

21. And the inhabitant no more complains, I am sick; the people that dwells therein is forgiven sin.

THE PROBABLE END OF THE PRIMARY ISAIAH.

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which a comparison of expressions may associate with them, give and receive light from Isaiah. They especially shew, how little piety there is in the assumption that hymns of praise must be written before the events which they celebrate.

XXIX.

We have come from Isaiah speaking in his well-known style of the events of his time, and specially of Assyria. We are passing to an unknown Prophet, whose style is of a different colour, who speaks of a return from exile, and of revenge upon oppressors, but specially upon Edom, in the spirit which we learn from Psalm cxxxvii. Jeremiah xlix. (with which Obadiah should be compared,) and Ezekiel xxv. xxxv. was the spirit engendered by the sufferings of the Exile, and expressed in the Poems subsequent to the Return. Hence we are carried forward nearly two centuries from Isaiah's time; from about 700 B.C. to a period verging upon 500 B.C. After two chapters, again, we return in chap. xxxi. (A. V. xxxvi.) to Sennacherib and Hezekiah. Hence the continuous flow of the book, or such a connexion as may be traced between Isaiah's Poems and the chronicle of his times, has been interrupted by a piece as foreign in style as in topic to its present place. If any one prefers imagining the piece predictive of a subsequent age, he will find it difficult to establish a claim of prediction from the piece itself, which has the air of immediate anticipation, almost of description; while it would be strange if the Return were introduced, before the Exile had been mentioned. At the least, there is no proof, hardly

probability, of these two chapters being written by Isaiah. A more natural conclusion is, that the arrangers of the sacred Poems of the nation, at an undefined time between Ezra and the Asmonean princes, associated with the works of their greatest Prophet this fragment and others, left without names, but aspiring to a day of deliverance and retribution such as he had dared to ask of God against Assyria. We have affixed commonly to the word Prophecy a sense so technically depraved from its original, that we little think, how much of aspiration and of denunciation it involved. Towards Heaven, Prayer, with such faith as Prayer in its simplest form implies; towards Man, an execution of the judicial functions of the old champions and avengers of Israel, combine with the perception of the Seer, to produce in a poetical form the composite result of Prophecy.

If it be asked, was the denunciation in chap. xxix. fulfilled, the usual answer, from Josephus x. 9. 7, (see Introduction to Obadiah) is, that Nebuchadnezzar fulfilled it. If this was so, the contemporaneous spirit of poetic denunciation only comes out more strongly. Josephus, indeed, (as Dr. Palgrave has pointed out,) does not include the Edomites by name with Ammon and Moab, whom Nebuchadnezzar subdued; but it would be strange, if they had not incurred at other times a similar, if not then the same, subjugation. If we have any faith in the decyphered annals of Assyria, they represent such things as habitual. At a much later date, the extinction of Idumean nationality under John Hyrcanus may, by a figure of speech, be called a fulfilment, but is in reason an exemplification of the spirit of international hatred, out of which the harsher tone of our denunciation sprang, contributing in turn to keep it alive. As the Jews under Hyrcanus did unto Edom, was done unto them by Rome; as the Romans under Titus did to Jerusalem, was done unto them by Alaric and Genseric; as the Goths and Vandals did unto Rome, has been

XXIX.

1. Come near, nations, to listen, and populations attend; hearken, Earth, and her fulness; world, and its outgoings.[1]

2. For JEHOVAH has indignation upon all the nations, and fury upon all their host; he has made them a curse,[2] given them over to slaughter; so that their slain are cast out,

3. So that their carcases, their stench mounts up, and the mountains are melted with their blood:

4. Yea, all the host of heaven is dissolved, and the heavens rolled together like a scroll; and all their host falls, like the falling of a leaf from the vine, and like the falling off from a fig-tree.

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[1] *Outgoings;* or, off-shoots. Considered fancifully by some, as if men, beasts, and vegetables were invoked. Vulg. Omne germen ejus. LXX. ὁ λαός.

[2] *A curse.* Heb. verbal of *Cherem*, as in v. 5—the terrible devotion of a hostile city, or country, used in sacerdotal, or crusading, specially in Semitic, wars. The darker features in Mr. Palgrave's Arabia are only developments of the principle.

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done unto them in war or siege in Germany, Spain, and Africa. The words of Christ still hold good, He that takes the sword, perishes by the sword.

1—4. Returning from Babylon, or elated with prospect of retributory disaster upon his country's enemies, some too keen patriot invokes the nations to behold the work of the Lord of hosts. The very heavens and their stars, as in Joel ii. 10, iv. 15; Matth. xxiv. 29; Revel. viii. 12, are made to sympathise with the hour of ruin on earth.

5. For my sword is drunken in the heavens; behold, it descends upon Edom, and, for judgment, upon the people of my curse.

6. The sword of JEHOVAH is filled with blood, fattened with fat; with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams; for JEHOVAH has slaying[3] in Bozrah, and great slaughter in the land of Edom.

7. And *as* buffaloes[4] come down their people, and *as* oxen the population of their mighty ones; until their land is drunken with blood, and their dust fattened with fat;

8. For JEHOVAH has a day of vengeance; a year of recompense, to champion Zion,

9. And her streams shall be turned into pitch, and her dust into brimstone; until her land becomes burning pitch;

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[3] *Slaying*, Vulg. victima. Our word 'sacrifice' has an idea of mental consecration, which although we trust it lay at the bottom of the Hebrew rite, was not expressed in the word slaying.

[4] *Buffaloes*; or, gazelles. Vulg. unicornes. LXX. οἱ ἀδροὶ, taking it metaphorically; which is best, if we follow the Masoretic points in making 'their people'=with them, and 'population of the mighty'=with the mighty (or with the bulls, as A. V.) but if a comparison of verse 5 justifies us in taking the preposition עִם as a noun עַם, the sense will be as given above. The *Reem*, whose name might be fitly Anglicised, or translated in the plural as horned cattle, is explained here as the buffalo, in Psalm 22 as the gazelle. The notion of the rhinoceros or the Indian ass, arose out of the word unicorn: first a mistake, then a fable.

5—9. As the Hebrews heretofore have been as sheep for the slaughter, so the bitter sons of Edom now will be as an assemblage of victims round the altar of battle. Comp. Micah ii. 12.

9—13. The writer desires the desolation to be perpetual; but his perpetuity is that of man's passion, which as it ebbs out in itself, is reversed by the eternal counsel of God, so long as Judæa flourished, Idumæa languished,

10. By night and by day it shall not be quenched; its smoke shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; there shall be no passer thereby for ever and for ever;

11. But the pelican and the bittern[5] shall possess it, and the heron and the raven dwell therein; and *man* shall stretch over it the line of demolishing, and the *plumbing*-stones[6] of desolation.

12. Her nobles,[7] they shall call, and therein is no kingdom; and all her princes shall come to an end.

13. But over her palaces come up thorns; nettle and bramble in her fortresses; and it shall be an abode of jackals, a court for the owlet's daughters;

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[5] *Bittern;* or, hedgehog; Vulg. ericius. LXX. ἐχῖνος. So most, but A. V. bittern, following, as I conjecture, Kimchi.

[6] *Plumbing stones, i. e.* stones used as a plummet.

[7] *Her nobles, &c.;* or, "As for her nobles—none are there, to proclaim a kingdom"—or, "whom they may summon to be king." The doubt turns chiefly on the punctuation; which, as received, gives an awkward syntax.

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but revived under the Romans, and reached a prosperity rivalling in Petra that of any Jewish city. Out of Edom came the Herods to rule Jerusalem.

13—17. The imagery of the wild creatures which are to possess Edom corresponds with that of the invocation against Babylon in ch. xii. (A. V. xiii.) It may be restricted to beasts, or extended to ghouls and vampires, cobolds and demons. The latter is the more usual construction, but not necessary.

It is sometimes allowed, that the spirit in this and other passages of the Old Testament is more vindictive than Christ in his Gospel permits to His followers. It is not sufficiently considered, that the temper of the imprecation must also tinge the account of the adversary; for he

14. And the wild cats[8] meet the hyænas,[9] and the hairy creature[1] cries to its fellow; also there haunts the night-bird,[2] and finds for herself a resting-place;

15. There nestles the springing serpent,[3] and lays eggs and hatches, and broods within her shadow; also there are gathered the falcons, each with its mate.

16. Search from off the scroll[4] of Jehovah, and read; not one of these has failed; they have not missed each its mate; for his mouth,[5] it has commanded, and his spirit it has gathered them;

17. And He has let fall their lot, and his hand divided to them *the land* by line; for ever shall they be its inheritors; from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

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[8] *Wild cats;* or, less definitely, creatures of the desert.

[9] *Hyænas,* or jackals. [1] *Hairy creature,* or goat, or satyr.

[2] *Nightbird,* or ghoul, a night-spectre. *Vulg.* 'Occurrent dæmonia onocentauris, et pilosus clamabit alter ad alterum; ibi cubavit lamia, et invenit sibi requiem.' As Jerome and Augustine partook the Eastern superstition of ghouls and spectres in desert places (Cf. Aug. *De Civ. Dei,* xv. 23,) most recent critics find it in this passage of the Prophet. All the modern creed of the East inclines this way; but the original writer may have meant only the wild and shaggy creatures out of whose shapes, haunting dusk and solitude, the superstition arose.

[3] *Springing serpent,* or great owl. Vulg. *ericius.*

[4] *Scroll,* or reckoning. LXX. ἀριθμῷ.

[5] *His mouth.* Hebr. text, my month: So Vulg. quod ex ore meo procedit; but the context makes it certain the original must have been not פִּי but פִּיו. LXX. ὁ Κύριος αὐτοῖς ἐνετείλατο, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ συνήγαγεν αὐτά.

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who execrates does not describe impartially foe or friend. This topic alone, if thoughtfully pursued, must lead us to see how large is the range of human passion and shortcoming in books which from their association with eternal truths we hold sacred. God inspires the religion, but man writes the literature; if we will not understand man's

XXX.

1. Let the wilderness and the dry place be glad ;[6] and let the desert exult and blossom as the lily ;[7] let it blossom abundantly, and exult even with exultation and singing.[8]

2. The glory of Lebanon is given to it, the majesty of Carmel and of Sharon ; they behold the glory of Jehovah, the majesty of our God.

3. Strengthen the weak hands, and set firm the tottering knees ; say to the disquieted of heart, Comfort *you*,[9] fear not : behold your God comes *with* vengeance, the requital of God comes to be your salvation.

4. Then shall be opened the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf be unsealed ; then shall the cripple bound like the deer, and the tongue of the dumb utter song ;

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[6] *Be glad ;* or, be glad *for them ;* but the apparent affix M. is probably an anomaly for N. or a mis-writiug, from the first letter of the next word.

[7] *Lily*, or rose. Vulg. lilium. LXX. κρίνον.

[8] *Exultation and singing.* LXX. τὰ ἔρημα τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, followed, as usual, by the Coptic, and suggesting to Lowth the well-watered plain of the Jordan. The slightest attention to the rhythmical repetition of phrase in the two verses shews no such alteration to be necessary.

[9] *Comfort you ;* or, be strong ; as theologically the Comforter is not merely the consoler, but the strengthener.

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part, we cannot understand God's. The Divine element may be justly—is for practical guidance safely—regarded as absolute, *i. e.* true without qualification ; but the human element, a large one, is relative, and needs many qualifications.

1, 2. While the hostile land is given to desolation, the land promised to Israel blooms before the exiles, as the Poet in imagination sees them return, and (3) encourages them to be strong.

4. Weakness physical and mental is changed to strength

5. Because in the wilderness are burst forth waters, and streams in the desert; so that the sand-shine[1] becomes a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the abode of jackals, where each one couched, is greenness[2] for reeds and rushes;

6. Yea, there is embankment and way, and the way of holiness[3] shall be its name; the unhallowed shall not pass thereby, but Himself for them[4] shall go along *the* way,[5] so that the simple may not stray.

7. No lion shall be there, and the ravenous among beasts shall not mount thereupon, not be found there;

8. But the redeemed[6] shall walk, and the ransomed of JEHOVAH return: until they come to Zion with song, and with everlasting joy upon their head; gladness and joy take hold of *them*,[7] and far off are[8] sorrow and sighing.

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[1] *Sand-shine;* or, mirage. Gr. ἡ ἄνυδρος. Vulg. *arida*, the often described glitter of the desert land, seeming like waters.

[2] *Greenness;* or, a court, as it were a *gard*-en.

[3] *Holiness;* or, of the sanctuary. The higher idea need not be excluded, though conceived by the writer in a Judaic form.

[4] *Himself for them;* or, it, *i. e.* the way, shall be theirs.

[5] *Shall go along;* or, shall cause them to go; pointing the participle as a causative, which I should prefer.

[6] *Redeemed and ransomed.* Hebr. verbs *Gahal* and *Padah;* both used here in the sense of deliverance.

[7] *Take hold of them.* LXX. εὐφροσύνη καταλήψεται αὐτούς, more correctly than Vulg. lætitiam obtinebunt.

[8] *Far off are.* Lit. Heb. flee away.

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in the light of God's presence; as difficulties (5) vanish, and Providence (6) impersonate makes smooth the way. God either makes our feet like the feet of deer fearless in rough places, or, if we are weak, levels our path, and turns aside dangers. (8) Health and joy are with those who at last dwell in the happy land.

Figure and metaphor are certainly here. The raised causeway, as for Eastern kings, the wild beasts scared aside, as from pilgrims well-guarded, the springing of fountains, such as thirsty way-farers need, the bloom of lily, or rose, in response to the joy of men in revisiting their home, are poetry's mode of describing Israel's return, upon Edom's downfall. Where does the figure end? Is Zion for the Jew all? or vengeance upon Edom all? In the writer's mind it probably was so. But has God no better mansion for us? Does he hold out no better victory, than one of clannish feud, and earthly ruin? He, the faithful Creator, of whom one said, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him,' and who has taught us to bless, and curse not? If He has appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness, and emphatically after death is the judgment, may not this invocation of the nations by a passionate Seer to behold scourge upon Israel's foe, suggest a scene of more awful retribution; with all mankind for spectators of Providence at length vindicated; an Israel of the mind, not of flesh or blood, for the object of the Divine protection; a mansion not made with hands, for the place where tears are wiped from off all faces? Why may not all which the fairer mystics, from Origen to Bunyan, have brought into such passages, not denying the primary sense, but superadding to it, be fitly expressed by the words? If they suggest to us, or embody appropriately, a hope which we have learned elsewhere, is not this a treasure to hold fast? Is not Biblical research a barren thing if it ends in lowering our hope? I answer, that if we find in the passage our eternal Shepherd leading our souls to a blessedness beyond the grave, it is not exposition, but adaptation. Such adaptations (of which the Pilgrim's Progress abounds in specimens,) may be justified on the theory that God has made earthly things patterns of heavenly; or that he wrote in Israel a parable of the world's history, and that on the principles

by which he dealt with his servants of old, he will deal with his servants for ever. Still we shall do wisely to make such things illustrations, not proofs; hardly admitting perhaps a mystical sense, until a recurrence of like circumstances or profoundly spiritual analogies render the application legitimate; so making God the eternal Prophet, and not men; at least not denying of the men their primary, it may be their only, meaning. If we outstep the limits which I have attempted to define, any citation transferring Zion to the Church, or to Heaven, can only be ornament, or a thing of feeling. Many citations in the New Testament, which a dead formalism has attempted to except from this canon, are its most striking exemplifications. Let me add the caution of Bishop Lowth:

"The first and principal business of a translator is to "give the plain literal and grammatical sense of his "author." . . . . . "Whatever senses are sup- "posed to be included in the Prophet's words, Spiritual, "Mystical, Allegorical, Analogical, or the like, they must "all entirely depend on the literal sense. This is the only "foundation upon which such interpretations can be "securely raised." . . . . . "Strange and absurd "deductions of notions and ideas, foreign to the author's "drift and design, will often arise from the invention of "commentators, who have nothing but an inaccurate trans- "lation to work upon. This was the case of the generality "of the Fathers of the Christian Church, who wrote "Comments on the Old Testament; and it is no wonder "that we find them of little service in leading us into the "true meaning."—*Prelim. Dissert. Is.* Once more, the beauty of an interpretation, or our satisfaction in it, is no proof that the Prophet intended it; but if the great faith of mankind, the promises of the Lord Jesus, the witness of the Apostles summed up by St. Paul (1 Cor. xv.) and the experience of a life with God, persuade us to lay hold on an eternal hope, we have a right to express it in Isaiah's

words, and no one should grudge us the belief that He who is from everlasting to everlasting, intended for us whatever comfort, or suggestion, they afford.

XXXI.

We here commence a group of four chapters, which seem substantially extracted from the 2nd book of Kings, xviii.—xx. or from whatever record is there transcribed. The submission of Hezekiah, and his tribute to Sennacherib, 2 Kings xviii. 14—16, are here omitted. The names of two of the Assyrian officers are unmentioned. Other minute changes may be observed, which are neither accidents of transcription, nor mere abridgments, (though the narrative is abridged,) but imply a special object. The extracts from the history seem introduced, so far as they illustrate Isaiah; hence his brawling antagonist, Rabshakeh, is exclusively prominent; the night, as the time of the disaster to the Assyrians, is not so historically specified; the song of Hezekiah, or of some poet, like the ready writer of Psalm xlv. celebrating the king's recovery, is here introduced.

Narrative is the predominant element in the book of Kings; poetical celebration in the extracts here. A comparison of such passages of Scripture as are repeated in different places, always with variations, (as Psalm xviii. in 2 Sam. xxii.) would tend to remove that superstitious notion of our sacred books being exempt from the properties of human authorship, which has caused in recoil so many mental embarrassments, and is one of the greatest obstacles to our abiding under the shadow of the Almighty.

These chapters are reprinted, with slight variation, from the Authorised Version.

XXXI.

1. Now it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, *that* Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them. 2. And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field. 3. Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, which was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder.

4. And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence *is* this wherein thou trustest? 5. I say, *sayest thou,* (but *they are but* vain words) *I have* counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? 6. Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so *is* Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him. 7. But if thou say to me, We trust in the LORD our God: *is it* not he, whose high places[1] and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar? 8. Now, therefore give pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses,[2] if thou be able on thy part to

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[1] Note, that the high places are here reckoned as Jehovah's.

[2] If the little kingdom of Judah could not, according to this taunt, produce two thousand riders, what can we say to the numbers in the books of Chronicles, *e. g.* 500,000 Ephraimites slain by Abijah, 2 Chron. xiii. 17, or 120,000 Jews slain by Pekah, and 200,000 captives restored to Judah by the

set riders upon them. 9. How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? 10. And am I now come up without the LORD against this land to destroy it? the LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

11. Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand *it:* and speak not to us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that *are* on the wall.

12. But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master sent me to thy master and to thee to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men that sit upon the wall, that they may eat and drink their own doings with you? 13. Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language,[3] and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. 14. Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you. 15. Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us: this city

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Ephraimites, 2 Chron. xxviii. 8? It is honourable to the Prophets (and the same holds good of the British Bards,) that, if just allowance be made for poetical glow and figure, they are free from the exaggerations in which the later Prose writers indulge. The Poetry is not only truer than the Prose ideally, but more accurate historically.

[3] Three things are remarkable in this verse: (1) The Assyrian appeals as confidently to a Divine mission, as any Israelite champion could. (2) What Hezekiah's counsellors most dread, is a religious panic amongst the people. (3) The language which ambassadors from Nineveh would speak, if not the Jews' tongue, would be Aramaic. Hence the evidence of the book of Genesis is confirmed, for the Semitic affinity of the Assyrians, and also in a less degree for that of the Chaldees. Also this is the earliest designation of Hebrew as the *Juda*-ic tongue. Some think it strangely early.

shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. 16. Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make *an agreement* with me *by* a present, and come out to me; and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern; 17. Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards. 18. *Beware* lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? 19. Where *are* the gods of Hamath[4] and Arphad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? 20. Who *are they* among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? 21. But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

22. Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, that *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

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[4] *Hamath*—now Hamah in Syria, deep-valleyed on the Orontes, about midway from Damascus to Aleppo. It was the traveller Robinson's northernmost point. Travels, iii. App. 176. *Arphad*, hardly known, but assumed to have been near Hamath. *Sepharvaim* is Sippara on the Babylonian segment of the Euphrates. The places mentioned in the next chapter, xxxii. 12, 13—are all in the region of the Euphrates and Tigris, having thus fallen under Assyrian sway.

XXXII.

1. And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. 2. And he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. 3. And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength to bring forth. 4. It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard; wherefore lift up *thy* prayer for the remnant that is left. 5. So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6. And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. 7. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. 8. So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah;[5]

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[5] *Libnah* and *Lachish*, both mentioned in Joshua x., as captured in the war against the five kings; the second in Micah i., as one of the first towns to suffer, have not, according to Robinson, had their sites identified. *Bibl. Res. Pal.* ii. 388-9. Jerome placed Lachish near Eleutheropolis, which would be on the Assyrian route southward. Hence the locality of Sennacherib's disaster, as towards Egypt, is confirmed.

for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish. 9. And he heard say concerning Tirhakah[6] king of Ethiopia, He is come forth to make war with thee. And when he heard *it*, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, 10. Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. 11. Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered? 12. Have the gods of the nations delivered themwhich my fathers have destroyed, *as* Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which *were* in Telasar? 13. Where *is* the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? 14. And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 15. And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying, 16. O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest *between* the cherubim, thou *art* the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. 17. Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to

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[6] *Tirhakah* is the more confidently identified with the *Taracus* of Manetho's 25th dynasty, because the chronology closely approximates. Herodotus, ii. 137, makes Sabacon govern Egypt shortly before Sethos, whom Sennacherib attacked; the second book of Kings, xvii. 4, represents Hoshea, the contemporary of Hezekiah, as intriguing with So (Sevechus) king of Egypt; here in due order we have Tirhakah; the succession, according to Manetho, having been Sabacon, Sevechus, Taracus. That only the first was known to Herodotus, need not surprise us, even if we do not adopt the explanation of a supremacy or alliance after dominion had ceased.

reproach the living God. 18. Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries, 19. And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. 20. Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD, *even* thou only. 21. Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria: 22. This *is* the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him: The virgin, the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. 23. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed; and against whom hast thou exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against the Holy One of Israel. 24. By thy servants hast thou reproached the LORD, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, *and* the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, *and* the forest of his Carmel. 25. I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.[1] 26. Hast thou not heard long ago, *how* I have done it; *and* of ancient times, that I have formed it; now I have brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste

[1] *Rivers of besieged places*; or, of Egypt. Hebr. *Matzor* (*quasi*-Mitzraim) LXX. πᾶσαν συναγωγὴν ὕδατος. *Vulg.* Omnes rivos aggerum. Comp. note on Micah vi. 12, and again, on Nahum iii. 14.

defenced cities *into* ruinous heaps. 27. Therefore their inhabitants *were* of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* the grass on the house tops, and *as corn* blasted before it be grown up. 28. But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. 29. Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest. 30. And this *shall* be a sign unto thee,[2] Ye shall eat *this* year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof. 31. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward; 32. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant,[3] and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this. 33. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. 34. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD. 35. For I will defend this

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[2] The meaning of the sign is, After two years' neglect of agricultural operations, the Third, *i.e.* the next following, year shall restore freedom to ploughman and sower. So above in vii. 14, we have seen the first two years of a child's life marked by a change which war caused in the usual course of tillage.

[3] The phrase *Remnant*, which will hereafter be a key-note to the form of St. Paul's phraseology, should be noticed as growing into historical significance. 1 Kings xi. 32, xii. 23; Micah vi. 18. (A. V. vii. 18.)

city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

36. Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred and fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they *were* all dead corpses.[4]

37. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. 38. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia: and Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.[5]

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[4] That the Egyptians represented to Herodotus this event as the gnawing of bowstrings by field-mice, is reasonably explained by the statement of Horapollo, that the mouse was in hieroglyphics a symbol of destruction. So Michälis, and others. With less evidence, though not improbably, a Cambridge Divine, the late Dr. Lamb, supposed the Mosaic account of the Fall of Adam to have originated in pictorial symbols. A question arises, when did Sennacherib die? The following verses imply no long interval. Josephus A. J. x. i., after Berossus, makes him survive the disaster a short time only. The book of Tobit, i. 15, defines the interval as fifty-five days. On the other hand, Assyrian inscriptions, if we can trust their explorers, (see *Introduction* to Isaiah) describe Sennacherib as reigning and prospering seventeen years longer. So Egyptian archæologists conceive that Pharaoh survived the loss of his host. The conclusion suggested to us is, that our Sacred Writers give the Hebrew aspect of a Providential deliverance of their people, without caring to limit things collateral. This is too natural to wonder at. Whether by the angel of the Lord we are to understand Pestilence, or other such calamity as might happen in the Desert, must be left to opinion. It is the Hebrew manner to see in incidents, which we call natural, the message of God. So Josephus says, that Herod Agrippa saw in an owl near him, a messenger of evil. The next reporter of this (who happens to be Eusebius) describes the king as seeing an angel. A similar conception tinges the narrative, Acts xii. 23, that the angel of the Lord smote Herod, where the visible agent seems to be Dysentery.

[5] Under Esar-haddon Assyria flourished, though Babylon attempted, and Media seems to have succeeded in, revolt, the prelude to dissolution.

XXXIII.

1. In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order:[6] for thou shalt die, and not live. 2. Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, 3. And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

4. Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, 5. Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold I will add unto thy days fifteen years. 6. And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city. 7. And this *shall be* a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken; 8. Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.

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[6] *Set thy house in order.* Hebr. give commands to thy house.

1—22. Bishop Lowth has taken the strange liberty of improving this chapter by introducing into it expressions out of the book of Kings, and altering the place of the two closing verses. Such a process might be justifiable, if it tended to restore the form of the original compiler; but if it gives a symmetrical fulness, which he never contemplated, and to that end treats his distribution of the

9. *A writing of Hezekiah's, king of Judah, on his being ill, when he recovered from his illness.*

10. I said, in the quiet of my days,[7] I shall go to the gates of the grave; I am deprived of the remainder of my years;

11. I said, I shall not see JAH, JAH[8] in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the dwellers of time;[9]

12. My dwelling is removed, and carried away from me like a shepherd's tent; I have broken short,[1] like a weaver, my life:

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[7] *Quiet of my days;* or, in the cutting off. Vulg. dimidio dierum. LXX. ἐν τῷ ὕψει τῶν ἡ.

[8] *Jah, Jah.* So the Hebrew; but the LXX. τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. How could this variation arise?

[9] *Dwellers of time;* or, of transitoriness. The Hebrew is an unique term, with perhaps a transposition of letters from a commoner form. The LXX. understood it in the sense of failing, ἐξέλιπεν. Vulg. quietis. Gesenius, and others, as the world of death, Hades.

[1] *Broken short,* or shrunk up, *i. e.* contracted; a highly probable sense, but less favoured by the next word.

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text, as if it were merely the arrangement of a transcriber, it can only mislead. The two closing verses seem to be misplaced in respect of logical order; but the misplacement cannot be cured by inserting them in a more natural position between the sixth and seventh verses, unless we otherwise alter the text, which we have no right for our pleasure to do. It is far more instructive to give the chapter as it stands; so we find in it an immensely significant illustration of the free and natural manner in which the sacred records of the kings and prophets were compiled. The Bible (if I may be guilty of so illogical though common a personification) has never concealed from us the fragmentary and composite character of its structure. *Is it not written* in some older Bible, or in some lost Scripture, is the form of appeal to authority, which our sacred writers

13. With pining sickness[2] he sunders me; from day to night thou consumest me:

14. I shouted[3] till morning, as a lion,[4] so he breaks all my bones; from day to night thou consumest me.

15. As a swallow, *as* a crane, so I chatter; I moan as a dove; my eyes languish upward; JEHOVAH, distress is on me,[5] pledge thou me.

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[2] *With pining sickness;* or, from the web of threads; also a very probable sense.

[3] *I shouted,* i. e. reading, with Knobel as if from שָׁוַע, as Lowth had read from שׁאג; but, if we abide by the text, we must render, *I strove,* or *I set* (some thought) in my own mind.

[4] *As a lion.* Hebr. כַּאֲרִי. This is the most exact parallel with the genuine text of Psalm xxii. 17, where the wicked are described as coming about the Psalmist *as lions;* which we, following the Versions, instead of the original, have unfortunately altered into *They pierced,* though the alteration would imply two anomalies in Grammar. Such error becomes important when it is made a polemical foundation, and is guarded by hope and terror. Mr. Oxlee, I see from a posthumous paper, defended manfully the genuine Text.

[5] *Distress is on me;* or, strive thou for me.

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constantly employ. In the case now before us, the song of Hezekiah has every appearance of being the oldest portion of the chapter. The title, *A writing of Hezekiah,* resembling nearly the στηλογραφία, or Michtam (=Michtav) of the Psalms, (which our preachers turn into a 'jewel'), shews that it once stood alone. Some editor (whom a conjecture which has become a tradition might permit us to suppose in Ezra's time,) undertook to illustrate it, and for that purpose extracted a part of 2 Kings xx., but instead of arranging the song, as might properly have been done, after the eleventh verse of that chapter, he placed it after the sixth. Hence the two closing verses have the appearance of an after-thought; and our good translators felt naturally obliged to give the tenses a retrospective form. The arrangement is really valuable, as throwing light on the formation of our sacred books; but even if we

16. What shall I say, that he may answer[6] me, and himself accomplish? shall I go mournfully all my years, for the bitterness of my soul?

17. The Lord is over them that live, and to all wherein is life, is His breath;[7] therefore wilt thou heal me, therefore cause me to live.

18. Behold, into peace is changed my bitterness;[8] and thou hast embraced my soul out of the pit of destruction; for thou hast cast behind thy back all my sins.

19. Surely not the grave praises, *not* death celebrates

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[6] *That he may answer.* This construction is preferred by me on account of the sequence of thought to another possible one.

[7] *His breath,* or spirit. Hebr. My breath; as if the life of Hezekiah's spirit came all by those benefits of Jehovah. The text in any way is hard. The simplest sequence of thought seems the best.

[8] *For to peace is changed my bitterness;* or, for peace it was bitter, very bitter to me, *i. e.* peace was the result. Comp. Psalm cxix. 75.

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deplored it, we could not alter it, without assuming to be ourselves writers, instead of editors, of Scripture.

19. The despondent language of Hezekiah has been explained by the Jewish habit of regarding Palestine as the great theatre of God's goodness. We may take it more naturally as Man's instinctive feeling on sinking into the unknown, even when not peopled by spiritual terrors of conscience, or by grosser pictures of torment. It may be observed, that the speaker distinguishes himself from his life, and does not necessarily contemplate extinction, although his language remains little hopeful, and almost offends against that one (the 7th) which of all the Articles of our Church is most difficult to reconcile with Scripture, as it is the only one which attempts to bias our interpretation of texts. In one or two of the Psalms the strain is more hopeful; but if the Old Testa-

thee; not the goers down into the pit have hope in thy faithfulness.

20. The living, the living, he praises thee, as I this day; father to sons shall make known of thy faithfulness.

21. JEHOVAH is my salvation; and my songs will we sing all the days of our life for[9] the house of JEHOVAH.

[9] *For.* Hebr. upon=in.

ment stood without illustration from the New, we should have dim conception of the many mansions in Our Father's House, which He who overcame the sharpness of death has opened to all believers.

21, 22. The boil has been thought a symptom of Plague. Bishop Lowth here remarks, "God, in effecting "this miraculous cure, was pleased to order the use of "means not improper for that end,"—and quotes from Pliny, "Folia fici strumis illinuntur." Hence the question arises, is a thing fitly termed 'miraculous' which is brought about by means proper to an end? In strictness of terminology, I apprehend it is not; the cure in this narrative would be providential, not miraculous. If the Bishop had developed his thought, he would have made the miracle consist not in the cure, but in Isaiah's foresight of it, and in the intimation (which may be supposed Divinely given,) of the means proper. Now, if any one supposes that Isaiah had heard of boils cured by such applications, (as we use linseed), and if it was the manner of Scripture for strong and prayerful presentiments, animated by trust, perhaps associated with suggestive incidents, to be announced in a figure as God's voice, as our own preachers sometimes proclaim a message from Heaven; and if it be entirely a misunderstanding to turn this figure of poetry and of nature into a conception of animal speech, or articulated voice, the miraculous element in the incident would

22. And Isaiah said, Let them take a lump of figs, and make a plaster upon the boil, that he may live. 23. And Hezekiah said, What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of JEHOVAH?

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disappear, though the narrative remained true. Some may go farther, and observing the framework of narrative to be later than the hymn imbedded in it, may make an undefined allowance for the expansion of incidents by time into an emphatical form. Thus the term fifteen years, if Hezekiah lived so long, would at his death, much more a few years later, be assumed to have been a promise accompanying the cure. I wish my criticism to be independent of this latter observation, which would bear more upon the theory of Evidences, than upon the interpretation of Isaiah.

Setting the specified time aside, there appears more of miraculous interposition in the return of the shadow on the sun-dial, whether it were such that the sun shone on a flight of steps in succession (as our older dials suggest,) or whether the steps surrounded a monolith. We must suppose some unusual phenomenon; which it has been endeavoured to calculate might be an eclipse, throwing a temporary, but evanescent shadow. Such a supposition is rendered plausible by the embassy from Babylon, the metropolis of astronomers, combined though it might be with political projects, or courtesy (2 Chron. xxxii. 31).

If we prefer considering the phenomenon miraculous, it will remain the last miracle in Jerusalem in the Old Testament. The cessation of such things so soon after the Prophetic activity adopted a prosaic form of authorship, instead of oral address and poetical tradition, is significant for the philosophical critic, but did not lessen the sense of intimate relation to God, which the later Prophets continued to enjoy. Poetry with them is cooling down; bolder figures are retrenched; exacter calculation of earthly re-

sources succeeds ; but devotion continues. There is a faith of imagination, and a faith of reason, in neither of which need the heart be dead.

If Science adopts an aggressive attitude towards the hypothesis of Miracle, and Criticism one of feebler, if not of vanishing, defence towards its evidence, the purely religious teacher is not dismayed. He sees that while the religion for which he is anxious retains its hold on men, miracles associated with it will find protection in its shadow ; whenever the religion fails, the record of miracles will not restore it. He can seldom propose to himself lessening their credibility as a desirable object ; for they appear to be forms of Providence, a sense of which it is his special duty to cherish. Still less will he consent to make all spiritual experience dependent for its life upon the disputable record of the days of old. Least of all will he exaggerate the lineaments of his Creed into repulsive proportions, because he can enforce them by Miracle, when his truer strength lies in the attractiveness of the Divine image, in whatsoever things are just, pure, and lovely, a sober conscience, a life with God. Again, so far as he discharges a critical function, he is no more bound than men in general to sway the balance a hair's breadth ; nor if he has physical knowledge, need he conceal, or in preaching contradict it ; although, as a minister of religion, if he would sustain souls, he must not feed them with that which is not bread, because it has no spiritual life.

If, in order to exempt such incidents from question, or from intimation that their strongest construction is not the foundation of our faith, any one would place them on a level with the Resurrection of Christ, such an attempt seems to me not wise, even if sincere. For who can read the fifteenth chapter of 1 Cor. and say that the evidence of a community, summed up by St. Paul within thirty-five years of the event, leaves no stronger assurance on the mind than we possess as to the addition of fifteen years to

Hezekiah's life, specified in 2 Kings xx., we know neither when, nor by whom, and transcribed in this appendix some years, we know, after the hymn of Hezekiah had existed as a separate fragment? That Christ rose bodily from the grave on the third day, rests historically on the belief of the hundred and twenty men, who met in the upper chamber (Acts i. 15—22). The most natural account of their belief is that it had a correspondent fact; this is enough to strengthen the hope of believers in Christ. If the evidence from the first day to our own has satisfied friends, without satisfying foes, and so wants the compulsory force of demonstration (as there are signs of its passing through an oral stage), this may shew, it was not meant to be a foundation, but a confirmation of the faith which enters within the veil. To those who receive Christ as the Son of God, his death seems far more miraculous than his resurrection. Those who acknowledge him but as the Son of Man, must feel his teaching to be an element of credibility in the subsequent story. The worthiness of the occasion, the dignity of the person, the nearness of the attestation, the importance to mankind of the immortality involved in the event, and the ever recurrent necessity of belief in this or some kindred pledge of our destiny, remove Christ's resurrection out of the category to which the specification of Hezekiah's fifteen years and the return of the shadow on the dial belong. It may be of God's goodness, that He would not rest our faith absolutely on display of power in the past, lest learning should avail more than piety, and scholars believe more immediately than the meek of heart; He may give adequate assurance as a reward to those who without seeing have loved, yet not change the idea of faith, which is to endure, as seeing the unseen; at any rate, the event best attested in the New Testament, the most sacredly associated with our hope, and most important, if we hold it, in all history, deserves a nobler use than polemical employment to bias interpretation elsewhere.

XXXIV.

1. At that time Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah; for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. 2. And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things,[1] the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.

3. Then came Isaiah[2] the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, *even* from Babylon. 4. Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that *is* in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not

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[1] *House of his precious things*, or treasury.

[2] *Then came Isaiah*, or entered. Vulg. Introivit autem Isaias propheta ad Ez. reg. et dixit ei; where the confessor-like relation of the Prophet is happily caught.

1—8. Merodach (which is the truer form than Berodach in 2 Kings), was the name of a Babylonian divinity. Baladan, to whose name it is prefixed, appears in Ptolemy's *Canon, i. e.* his list of Babylonian kings, as Mardoc-empadus, the sixth from Nabonassar, and is calculated to have reigned from 721 to 709 B.C. A fragment of Berossus, transferred from Polyhistor to the Armenian chronicle of Eusebius, places him a reign later, and makes him slain by Elibus [Ptol. Belibus], whom Sennacherib dethroned. This would bring him down to 702. If we follow the first

shewed them. 5. Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: 6. Behold, the days come, that all that *is* in thine house, and *that* which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. 7. And

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of these notices, we shall have Hezekiah's sickness preceding the invasion of Sennacherib, and possibly falling in the reign of king Sargon. This would give a striking instance of unchronological arrangement in the fragments of Isaiah. If we prefer the second date, or combine the two, by conceiving the return of Baladan as a native prince to the throne of Babylon, after an interval of Assyrian conquest, the sickness of Hezekiah may be brought down to where our chapter seems to place it. The Nineveh inscriptions are said to confirm the second accession (2 Rawlinson, *Ass. Mon.*), and the defeat and expulsion by Sargon and Sennacherib. The chief point undetermined is the date, which is affected by our choice of chronologies as explained in the Introduction; but the later chronology still permits the sickness to precede Sennacherib's invasion, as most critics prefer. Gesenius makes them synchronise. The name *Bal-adan* seems purely Semitic, implying the lordship of Bel; but the attempt to find an Iranian equivalent for it in the second half of Ptolemy's *Mardoc-empadus,* is highly problematical.

If we have observed the repugnance of Isaiah and the Prophets to foreign alliances, we shall understand the jealousy with which he would view an embassy likely to entangle the city of peace in league with a rebel who was destined to be defeated, and whose success might have been dangerous. As the old age of Charlemagne wept at sight of the Norsemen's vessels, whose reign of piracy was yet to come, so it hardly exceeded strong foreboding to anticipate that, as Assyria had done to Ephraim, Babylon

of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. 8. Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good *is* the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.

END OF APPENDIX TO ISAIAH.

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would do to Judah. The language is too natural for any one to desire to question its reality. The date of record is too little certain for us to be able to insist upon it as prediction. Our judgment of it will ultimately be guided by the analogy which passages, more open to investigation, suggest.

The answer of Hezekiah puts in its simplest form the sentiment, which statesmen often act upon, and in some historical instances have expressed.

INTRODUCTION TO NAHUM.

NAHUM has come down to us with two titles. We read first, what was probably added last. The nearer to the book, which seems the older title, describes the Prophet as a native of Elkosh. If we could trust St. Jerome to refrain from emphasising a conjecture into an assertion, this had been a village in Galilee, of which his guide shewed him the ruins. *(Prolog. in Nahum.)* Such has been the tradition of the Church, though from the manner of Cyril's mentioning it, (*πάντως που*, and *ἐκληψόμεθα*,) we must conclude it was the offspring of conjecture. If we receive it as of the birth-place, we cannot extend it to the residence, for the Prophet apparently lived in exile, certainly made Judah, and not Ephraim, the centre of his affections. He may have emigrated to Judah or Egypt, and yet have retained a title of origin.

Such, however, is hardly the Jewish tradition. The saying of the scribes (St. John vii. 52), that no prophet arose out of Galilee, is inconsistent with either a Galilean site for Elkosh, or with an ingenious suggestion that Caper-naum was the Prophet's village. Benjamin of Tudela, in the 12th century, found a synagogue (at Mosul,) near the site of Nineveh, which claimed sanctity from Nahum's residence and tomb. Though the village has been Christianized, it is still a resort of Jewish pilgrims, as recent travellers attest. (Layard, i. *Nineveh*, p. 233.)

If the question depended on a balance of traditions, either of which may be fabulous, St. Jerome's priority might weigh against Jewish nationality, and our predilection would turn the scale. But the book itself, in which the

turn of a syllable outweighs volumes of tradition, has some right to be heard. That Assyrian words are traced in it, I cannot urge, for they seem to me to admit of a Hebrew explanation. The *Huzzab* of A. V. is the familiar passive of a verb, meaning to fix. *Minnĕzārim* may be explained easily from *Nazar*, to crown, or separate; *Taphsarim*, with but the anomaly of an exchanged sibilant, may mean the 'offspring of princes.' Not the less, the life-like description of Nineveh, the familiarity with her watery site, the appropriate imagery of the lions, the allusions to the brick-kiln, the sketch of what the city had been in her thronged streets and cruel victories, resemble most the work of an eye-witness. The leonine sculpture which we gaze at dreamingly in our museums and crystal palaces, had drawn from the Hebrew exile glances of antipathy, as it symbolized too well the lordly rapine of his masters. The allusion to Judah is an anticipation how she will receive the news from afar; the description of the scarlet Medes, and of the river-gates bursting, is by one who had seen with his eyes. When Scripture is thus fertile in suggestions, the tradition prolonged throughout generations of the race out of whose creative agony the volume itself sprang, has the fullest right to offer itself as a supplementary document. Hence the general voice of modern critics seems justified in accepting the Assyrian site of Elkosh. The book is by a captive Hebrew, whose ancestors, rather than himself, we may conceive as carried from Palestine to Assyria in one of many deportations between Pul and Esarhaddon. A prosaic picture of the feelings with which such exiles regarded the Median insurrection against Nineveh appears in the first and last chapters of Tobit. The far grander strain of Micah iv. 11. (A. V. v. 6,) has suggested a question, whether the Hebrew element, often of old insubordinate,

might not contribute to the agitation of realms in which it dwelt against its will. Some might deem themselves called to work with the God of their fathers. What at least they desired, and exulted over, we read in Nahum.

Our older divines,[1] misled by the account from Ctesias, preserved in Diodorus, imagined two great captures of Nineveh, both by Medes and Babylonians, but one as early as 804 to 747, the other as late as 625 to 606. The first of these is now admitted to be so far imaginary, as to be a duplicate by anticipation of the second. Arbaces and Belesys are forecasts of Cyaxares and Nabo-pol-assar; Sardanapalus perhaps should be Saracus; the events are one. Ctesias has not only kings as fictitious as any in the prehistoric romance of Scotland, but represents as effeminate the most warlike captains of antiquity, and is quite untrustworthy. We do not deny a far earlier empire of Assyria, but find between 800 and 600, from Pul to Saracus, the realities which concern us in relation to Hebrew prophecy. This result is not affected by collision of authorities or confusion of names, such as Assuerus for Cyaxares, (compare Newcome's note on the end of Nahum,) and may be verified by comparison of Marsham's *Canon Chronicus* with Clinton's *Fasti H.*, Grote, H. G. ch. xix., and the recent works of Mr Rawlinson, which on this question are exhaustive and trustworthy. It does not follow, because Ctesias is fabulous, that everything in him is fable; for, as his leading fiction is founded on a true event, the same may be conceived of his more striking details. We can understand that in the half-century of Assyrian decline, one account would represent Media and Babylonia as owned by tributary princes, ano-

[1] Prideaux, *Conn.* i. p. 1; Jahn, *Hebr. C.* B. v. S. 40—1. Comp. Davison; *Lect. Proph.* on Nahum. Davidson, *Introd. Old Test.* iii. pp. 292—300, but more especially, Henry Browne's *Ordo sæculorum*, App. iii. pp. 546—566.

ther by altogether kings. Hence I have not felt obliged to change the inundation described in Nahum into a stream of nations, though eminent scholars do so.

The first impression left by a dispassionate perusal of our Prophet, is that of contemporaneousness, or subsequence, to the events which he narrates. The defenders are fallen, the assailants hasten to the wall, the siege-screen is set fast, the city is taken, her daughters moan as doves, her people refuse to rally, she becomes a pool of waters. This impression need not be removed by the subsequent reflexion, with which in his closing Epode the Prophet travels back into the counsels of Eternity for the causes of the event over which he exults. Here, unhappily, dignitaries, who must be treated respectfully, assure the State in Senate or Judgment-hall, and the Church in her solemn assemblies, that, whoever takes so simple a view must be logically striking at the Supernatural, the Atonement, the Holy Trinity, the Resurrection to eternal life. Whether those doctrines are believed less, or perhaps more, by an interpreter who unmistakeably teaches them, than by such accusers, he may plead that no disinclination to them is actually or logically implied in the belief that the Prophet of God meant what he said, when he affirmed Nineveh to have been captured.—I can not so read Aristotle as to think a false premiss the way to a true conclusion; nor so learn Christ, as to apprehend it a duty to read the Bible, and a sin to understand it. It is unfortunate, if men are so little accustomed to reasoning, that because with inane simulation of dialectics they are "invited to notice assumptions," they suppose something must have been "assumed" by some one else, when in reality an issue has been feigned for the convenience of the inviter. After all, the most reverential course is the simplest, to take the Prophet at his word.

On the other hand, it has been thought decisive, and formerly retarded my own judgment, that Josephus (A. J. ix. 11.) distinctly places Nahum a hundred and fifteen years before Nineveh's fall. If we concede this writer's good faith, we may doubt his accuracy; the more, because his citation hardly corresponds to our text. He may have followed any tradition, or, observing appearance of allusion to Sennacherib, may have conjectured the book to have followed closely upon the invasion as an oracle of retribution; again, he may have been swayed by proximity of arrangement to Jonah, although subject, and not time, had determined that arrangement: at best, he is not a writer to outweigh any strong probability of internal evidence. Upon the same ground, the absence of consonance with the language of the book, some modern conjectures that the abortive siege of Phraortes, or the first attempt of Cyaxares, gave occasion to the Poem, may be respectfully dismissed.

The style of Nahum has features of its own. He writes as an artist with the highest rhythmical finish. He abounds in sharply defined images, as one who lingered over his thought, until he gave it the utmost precision. Each word conveys an idea, each couplet almost a sentence: the balance of antithesis is even more between phrases than sentences. His originality may be more questionable than his art. He borrows from Joel and from Isaiah, as he will be imitated by the second Isaiah. The book has so manifest an unity, that it throws indirectly light upon the manner of composition of other Prophets, whom we are accustomed, needlessly, to break into divisions. If there is a tinge of obscurity, it arises perhaps once from transposition of phrase; oftener from rapid transition between Nineveh whose ruin the Prophet describes, and Judah whose freedom he felicitates. Such hovering be-

tween two objects, contemporaneous, or at hand, has nothing in common with the melancholy confusion, which traditional interpreters create by introducing at random heterogeneous thoughts, and an inconsistent horizon of events, into the speech of some simple, though sublime, writer, who expressed what he felt, describing what he saw. No verse in Nahum can be tortured into expectation of a Messiah. Nor, again, is there a word which, by want of harmony with its place, suggests suspicion of its entire genuineness.

The moral of Nahum is, that God governs the world. His inspiration rests upon his perception of this truth, the most purifying which the heart of man can conceive. It is expressed harshly, from local and national impulses: grace and truth had not then come by Jesus Christ. Such Scriptures have an historical value for perusal in our congregations, which no later works, even of higher inspiration, could possess. Yet their devotional use, proceeding as upon the absoluteness and finality of whatever is revealed, may, as in the case of the maledictory Psalms, sometimes generate a crooked interpretation, or often render the service less a medium of that direct and personal invocation between God and the soul of man, which no devout person willingly surrenders. It may be reverential and becoming to 'assist' as in a classical 'liturgy,' the objections to which may often admit of historical explanation: yet that hardly satisfies the hungering of the soul after God. A wiser selection of 'Psalms and Lessons,' better still, a larger freedom of substitution, such as our Reformers gave, and the Stuart Prelates took away, might do more to place consciences in unison with what is read, than projects which contain more to attract or alarm. It would satisfy those who can never forget that Christ's first words were blessing, and his last example forgiveness, better

than disquisitions on the "supernatural," devised as barriers against inquiry; better than playing a grave comedy with terms of subscription, without considering the things subscribed; better even than dispensing with subscription, which does not create the obligation of which it is but an act of deliberate recognition. Worthy of all respect, when genuine, is the charity which heals divisions of sects; yet the causes of these, originating as often in human nature as in religion, are infinitesimally small in comparison with difficulties which press upon all communions, or shut out serious minds in all, by some theory, from peace with our Heavenly Father. Both greater and lesser would best be remedied by investigations which may seem the longest, yet ultimately prove the safest way.

Few politicians now discover a Nineveh lording it over the nations. The name of the rival city is more familiarly symbolical. Wherever analogous wrongs exist, an unfaltering faith will still look for kindred, though lingering, retribution. If we apply our narrative, as a parable, in the better spirit of the ancient expositors, to Christendom, we may look for an after-time of days, when the two things most sacred in the world, the fear of God and the love of Truth, shall not be put asunder, so that a pure mind cannot take a step in either direction without a sense of perplexity or of sin; when reason shall not lift up sword against faith, nor faith against reason; but the Churches turn their cursings into blessings, neither in the name of charity shall they learn hatred any more.

The forces which create religion are as permanent as those which destroy it. The ladder set upon the earth, and reaching into heaven, is not fallen; but he who thinks so, dreams.

NAHUM.

I.

A Burden on Nineveh. The Book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

1. JEHOVAH is a jealous and vengeful God; JEHOVAH is vengeful and a lord of wrath; JEHOVAH is vengeful to his adversaries, and mindful[1] is He to his enemies.

2. JEHOVAH is enduring[2] in anger, and great in power, and acquits no acquittal at all; JEHOVAH is in the whirlwind, and his way in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet;

3. He rebukes the sea, and makes it dry; and parches up all the rivers; *so that* Basan withers, and Carmel; and withers the bloom of Lebanon.

[1] *Mindful.* This attribute is the opposite of the description in Psalm ciii. 9.

[2] *Enduring*, or patient. Hebr. *Erech*, long, Ezek. xvii. 3. usually of slowness to anger; longanimity.

A burden, or utterance, on Nineveh, seems an editor's description of the subject. *The book of the vision, &c.* is the older tradition of the authorship. Elkosh, according to Jerome, was a village in Galilee, but has been claimed by Jewish tradition, from Benjamin of Tudela downward, as the site of a synagogue near Mosul, *i. e.* Nineveh.

1—5. Not only the awful conception of the Lord God of the Hebrews, as jealous, and the hungry temper engendered by suffering, but the inexorableness of the Divine judgments, as traced on the face of Nature, and on

4. The mountains tremble from him; and the hills are molten; so that the earth is lifted[3] before him, the world, and all the dwellers therein.

5. Who can stand before his indignation, and who abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured forth like fire, and the rocks are shattered before him.

6. Gracious is JEHOVAH for a stronghold in the adversary's day;[4] and one that acknowledges them that trust in him;

7. And with an overflowing flood he works completion of her place;[5] and drives his enemies into darkness;

8. What are you contriving against JEHOVAH? He works a complete work; the adversary[6] shall not rise a second time.

9. For even as[7] thorns entangled, and as in their drink drunken, they are devoured, as stubble fully dry.

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[3] *Is lifted.* Vulg. Contremuit. LXX. ἀνεστάλη.

[4] *The adversary's day;* or, day of trouble; so in verse 8, below.

[5] *Of her place;* or, from her rising; *i. e.* so that she rise not again; which, with the slightest change of points, I believe would be a preferable reading.

[6] *Adversary,* or trouble, as in v. 6 also.

[7] *Even as.* Hebr. to.

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the destiny of kingdoms, and specially the instance of an over-ruling Providence in the retribution wrought upon Nineveh, suggest to Nahum words of devout and stern exultation, in which he breaks forth declaring what sort of a God is Jehovah, and how impossible it is to resist Him.

6. Jehovah has a gracious side for those who trust in Him, but (7—9) makes an utter work of the city which he overthrows, although near it exiles may survive.

9. There may be a doubtful allusion to the banquets of the last Assyrian king, interrupted according to Greek tradition (Diodor. Sic. ii. 27, Athenæ, xii. p. 529) by the Median assault; but the simile may be taken as general.

10. Out of thee came a contriver of evil against JEHOVAH, a counsellor of wickedness ; thus spake JEHOVAH, If they are tranquil, and mighty though they be, even so are they cut off, and have passed away ;[8]

11. I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more ; but now will shiver his yoke[9] from off thee, and will break thy bonds in sunder.

12. But of thee [*Nineveh*] JEHOVAH has given command, Never sowing[1] shall be of thy name again ; out of the house of thy gods I will cut off graven image, and make molten image thy grave ; for thou art despised.

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[8] *Have passed away.* The plural termination of the verb seems to have become entangled in the following word. The sentiment is as in Psalm xxxvii. 36.

[9] *Yoke ;* or rod. Vulg. virgam. LXX. *ράβδον*, implying a different, perhaps, preferable, punctuation.

[1] *Sowing*, here in a good sense ; but in Hosea, in the double sense of sowing and scattering.

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10. Out of Nineveh had come forth Pul and Sennacherib, but Jehovah had made their power transient.

11. Turning to Judah, Nahum conceives, by the light of events, Jehovah promising to afflict her no more. 12. Other destiny awaits the oppressor, as another Counsellor, even God, pronounces upon her, than the one whom she sent against Judah. We may note in Belial, which means *un-profit*-ableness, an instance of the personifying imagination, which has evoked from abstract non-entity the graceful demon of Milton's Hell ; but reason concurs with faith in reminding us, if evil be an unsubstantial and fugitive disturbance, requiring no archetypal author, Good is positive by nature and permanent by design, so that in no phase of sane thought can it cease to require an eternal Providence as its creator or upholder.

II.

1. Behold upon the mountains the feet of one with glad tidings, proclaiming peace; feast, Judah, thy festivals, perform thy vows; for the wicked shall not continue to pass over thee any more; he is utterly cut off.

2. The shatterer is gone up before thy face; *time to* fortify fortress,[2] watch the way; harden thy loins, strengthen thy power mightily.

3. Since JEHOVAH[3] turned *away* the pride of Jacob, *and* as the pride of Israel; since the emptiers emptied them, and marred their branches:

4. *So* is the shield of his mighty ones reddened, the men of *his* host are empurpled; the chariots *are* with flame of torches[4] in the day of his array, and the pines are brandished;

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[2] *Fortify fortress.* Vulg. qui custodiat obsidionem.

[3] *Since Jehovah turned;* or, reading כְּ for כִּי (and ישב perhaps, as causative), as Jehovah overthrew Samaria, so now Nineveh. Most critics take *turn* in the sense of restore; but as to turn captivity is to restore, so I conceive to turn pride is to overthrow. The genius of Hebrew thought might make Jehovah's act through the Assyrians not less the ground of their ruin.

[4] *Flame of torches;* or, of scythes, supposing the chariots armed as those of the Britons, and giving an otherwise anomalous word an Arabic origin.

1, Far from Judæa, the exiled poet imagines, with what feelings the news of Nineveh's fall will be heard in the land which her kings had wasted. The words are used by the latter Isaiah of like news at the end of the exile, and applied in the Gospel to the advent of a spiritual rule. 2. Turning to Nineveh, he describes the coming of the evil day. 3. As Samaria had fallen, all her pride stript, 4, so against Nineveh in turn come the troops of the Mede and Babylonian, who, like the Lacedæmonians,

5. The chariots in the streets madden; they dash against each other in the broad ways; their aspect is like torches; like lightnings, they rush.

6. He calls his worthies to mind; they stumble on their march: they hasten towards the wall, and the siege-screen is prepared,[5]

7. (*While* the gates of the rivers are opened, and the palace dissolved,) and it is set fast;

8. She is laid bare, and carried away, with her handmaidens sighing, as the murmur of doves, beating tune upon their breasts, and Nineveh is as a pool of waters;

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[5] *Siege-screen.* Vulg. umbraculum. LXX. *τὰς προφυλακάς.* So apparently for defence; but not less probably the vinea, or testudo, with which the besiegers might cover their approach. The verb, *it is set fast,* in the next verse evidently belongs to this *siege-screen,* and may have been separated by accident. Also I can find the subject of verse 8 only in Nineveh, whether misplaced, or anticipated.

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wore scarlet, like the Samnites, bore emblazoned shields, whose chariots either had scythes, or flamed with torches, whose spears were as the waving pine, as Homeric spears were ash-trees.

The fifth verse describes either the alarm in the city, or the host advancing to storm.

6, 7. In vain the king (Sardanapalus the Greeks called him,) reckons on defenders already fallen or wavering; the assailants throng quicker, their screen of shields, or wicker work, is attached to the walls as they pour on; simultaneously the river-flood becomes their ally, unless discarding an incident warranted by tradition (Diodor. Sic. ii. 27; Calvert's Trans. iii. 7), we choose to understand the flood of battle; 8. the daughters of Nineveh (not as Jerome, towns, but women,) go captive, moaning like doves. The city easily flooded by canals from the Tigris (comp. Marsham, Sec. xv. and xviii. and Rosenm. i. h. l.)

9. *The city is* waters,[6] and the people[7] fleeing: Stand, make a stand; but there is none that regards.

10. Plunder silver, plunder gold; and there is no end to the store; the splendour from all objects of desire.

11. *Lo!* emptying,[8] and plundering, and laying waste; and heart melting, and tottering of knees, and sinking in all loins; and the faces of all have gathered blackness.[9]

12. Where is the abode of lions,[1] and she that was the feeding-place of young lions; where the lion, the great lion, stalked; the lion's whelp, with none to scare *them?*

13. *Where* the lion ravened for the fill of his whelps,

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[6] *The city is waters.* Hebr. from the days of her being; but Vulg. *aquæ ejus* (after *piscina aquarum.*) LXX. τὰ ὕδατα αὐτῆς. These two versions probably give the nearest attainable approximation to an older text. One might guess a causative participle of the verb עמד to stand, as the next clause implies an emphatic antithesis. At all events, it is unnatural to take the *waters* metaphorically, or to think ancient *days* spoken of, so soon after the bursting of the river gates is mentioned.

[7] *The People.* Hebr. They.

[8] *Emptying, &c.* Vulg. Dissipata est, et scissa et dilacerata. Many treat the third word as a participle.

[9] *Have gathered blackness;* or, withdrawn their colour; as in Joel ii. 6, which Nahum in this passage evidently imitates. Vulg. facies omnium, sicut nigredo ollæ.

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becomes a pond; unless we choose to understand this (like Revel. xvii. 15) of multitudes of people, once thronged, but now fugitive.

10, 11. Plunder of wealth succeeds, with fainting of heart and limb in helplessness. 12, 13. The grim lion of Assyria, symbolised by figures of the king of beasts, but meaning the human ravener of nations, is at length scared from his den,

13, 14. while the spoils of the vanquished are disgorged, and the Judge of the whole earth blots out the

and strangled for his lionesses,[1] and filled with prey his den, and his abodes with rapine ?

14. Behold me against thee,[2] is the saying of JEHOVAH of hosts, until I burn with smoke her chariots, and the sword devour thy young lions; and I will cut off thy ravening from the earth, and voice from thy messengers[3] shall be heard no more.

III.

1. Ah! city of blood, all of her falsehood, that was full of violence, from whence departed not ravening;

2. Noise of scourge, and noise of rattling of wheel, and horse prancing, and chariot bounding;

3. Horseman mounting, and flame of sword, and lightning of lance; and multitude of slain, and mass of corpses, with no end to dead bodies; *men* stumbled over their dead bodies.

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[1] *Lionesses.* Vulg. leœnis; but for לביא, in the preceding verse, has *ut ingrederetur*, having read the infinite of the verb בוא. We see from Psalm lvii. 5, that the feminine form proves nothing against the existence of the masculine; any more than *leœnæ* against *leones.*

[2] *Against thee.* Here, as below, iii. 5, the Chaldee inserts, or retains, *sending my rage*, ag. t.

[3] *Thy messengers.* The Hebrew, with a redundant, or paragogic, H, is one of Nahum's unusual forms; unless, changing the penultimate letter, we explain it by a rapid transition of person, *her* messengers.

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place from whence his Temple had been threatened, and Rabshakeh had gone forth to taunt his people.

1—3. Having in truly lyrical strain narrated the city's fall, the sacred poet turns round to reflect on its causes, and describes the manners which had been. Cruelty, such as our Assyrian relics verify, had been mixed with pomp and bustle.

4. Because of the multitude of hirings of the comely-seeming harlot, the lady of enchantments, that barterer of nations with her hirings, and of races with her enchantments:

5. Behold me against thee,[4] is the saying of JEHOVAH of hosts, until I strip thy fringes above thy face, and make nations behold thy nakedness, and kingdoms thy shame;

6. Until I cast upon thee abominations, and make thee vile, and fix thee as a gazing-stock.

7. And it shall be, all that gaze on thee, shall each flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is destroyed: who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?

8. Shalt thou fare better than No,[5] *city of* Ammon,

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[4] *Against thee.* 'Sending my rage against thee;' the Chaldee; but interpolation is more probable there, than omission in the Hebrew.

[5] *No-Ammon.* A. V. populous No; more correctly, LXX. *μερίδα Ἀμμών.* Jerome says, i. h. l. "Hebræus qui me in SS. erudivit, ait Hebraicè *No* dici "Alexandriam, *Amon* autem multitudinem sive populos, et esse ordinem lec-"tionis: Nunquid melior es [ab] Alexandriâ populosâ? . . . . . non quod "eo tempore Alexandria vocaretur, quippe quæ longo post tempore ab "Alexandro M. Mac. nomen accepit, sed quia sub nomine primo, id est *No*, "semper Ægypti metropolis fuerit, et abundantissima populis." . . "Et de-"scribitur situs Alexandriæ, &c." Let the reader meditate on this passage. It shews, how a city already swept away in Nahum's time could be identified by a Jewish Rabbi with a city which did not exist until three centuries later, with a different site, origin, history, and tongue; while to aid the identification, a foreign word *Amun*, the name of one of the greater Deities, (known to us as Jupiter Ammon,) is made to do duty as a Hebrew word, meaning multitude. This is only a specimen of the genius of interpretations which Jewish Hermeneutics engendered, and which when harmonised with Christian associations are still substituted for the original sense of Scripture.

4—7. God, having seen the insolent barterer of nations over-riding natural bonds by her despotism, takes counsel to redress his own world. Contempt, instead of conquest, offscouring, instead of ornament, await the Queen of nations.

8, 9. Why should Nineveh fare better than the 'hun-

that was situate among the rivers, with waters all around her; whose rampart was a sea, waters her wall ?[6]

9. Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and *it was* infinite; Nubia[7] and the Libyans were amongst thy aid;

10. She also to exile has gone in captivity ;[8] while her

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[6] *Waters her wall.* Heb. MYM, punctuated Masoretically, Mi-YaM, from the sea; but taken by LXX. and Vulgate, as Ma YiM, waters, ὕδωρ τὰ τείχη αὐτῆς, aquæ muri ejus: a clear instance, I think, of the Versions excelling the Masora, notwithstanding the meritorious pains bestowed on the latter.

[7] *Nubia and Libyans;* or, the Moors and Libyans. Heb. Put, or Phut, and Lubim. Comp. Gen. x. 6.

[8] *Has gone in captivity;* so the Hebrew tense, faithfully rendered by the Vulgate *ducta est*, but wrongly, as too often happens, made predictive by the LXX. πορεύσεται αἰχμάλωτος. The dominant tenses throughout here are past; though with a subordinated present in attendance.

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dred-gated' Thebes, once Queen of upper Egypt, sheltered by the Nile and its channels (Herodot. ii. 140—150; Marsham, *Sec.* xv. and xviii.) sacred to a god, Amun, worthier than any of Nineveh to shield, nay one, whose attributes of eternity and mystery have some resemblance to those of Jehovah. "Pathros est Thebais : cujus metropolis "NO, quæ et Diospolis, et Thebæ Ægyptiæ." (Marsham, *Sec.* xviii.) If we understand this *No* of a smaller Diospolis, (as the name recurs,) the argument is only weakened. We must not confound it with *Moph*, or *Noph*, *i.e.* Memphis. Comp. Ezek. xxx. 13—16, and Juv. 'vetus Thebe centum jacet obruta portis.'

9. From an antiquity which we may illustrate by the story of Troy, but in comparison with which Greek or Latin history is a thing of yesterday, No-amun, Grecised into Diospolis, had ruled from upper Egypt the adjacent part of Africa: "Africa et Libyes fuerunt in auxilio tuo." Put, says Marsham, is Libya; Mr. Poole defines it as Nubia.

10. All this had not saved Thebes from the armies of

infants too were dashed in pieces at the end of all the streets; and over her honourables they cast lot, and all her chieftains were bound in hand-chains.[9]

11. Thou also shalt be drunken,[1] shalt be hidden away; thou, too, shalt seek stronghold from the enemy; all thy fortresses as fig-trees with the first ripe figs; if there is a shaking, then they fall on the mouth of the eater.

12. Behold thy people women in thy midst: to thy haters are opened wide the gates of thy land; fire has devoured thy barriers.

13. Draw thyself waters for entrenchment;[2] strengthen thy fortresses; go deep in clay, trample the mortar, make the brick-kiln strong;

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9 *Hand-chains*, or fetters. LXX. χειροπέδαις. Vulg. compedibus.

1 *Drunken*, *i. e.* of the cup of slavery, as in Habakkuk ii. 15. Or here, shalt be a hireling, as Abp. Newcome, needlessly.

2 *Waters for entrenchment.* LXX. ὕδωρ περιοχῆς. The undoubted sense of this phrase here may suggest reconsideration of the word *Matzor* which I have preferred rendering 'Egypt' in Micah vi. 12 (A. V. vii. 12), where see Note, and compare Isaiah xxxii. 25. Might not many old entrenchments have been calculated for inundation? *e. g.* the great ditch near Newmarket, from the Cam, which it approaches?

Sargon or Sennacherib. The Vulgate and A. V. rightly make the event past.

11, 12. The decree, which must in the Divine thought have preceded the destruction already described, is with poetic colours imagined, as extending the fate of Thebes to Nineveh. The second verse, resuming the description, is a clue to the first. Compare Isaiah xxiv. 4, xxv. 8; (A. V. xxviii. and xxix.)

13. Preparation is tauntingly advised. 14—16. The Assyrians had resembled locusts in their vast numbers, in their transitory character, in their utter destruction by a stronger nature, as by fire, or scorching sun. I do not

14. There let fire devour thee, sword destroy thee; devour thee like the locust-worm, *though thou* be many as the locust-worm, and multiply thyself as the locust;

15. Thou hast multiplied thy merchants beyond the stars of heaven; the locust-worm strips,[3] and flits away;

16. Thy coroneted[4] *are* as the locusts, and thy princelings as the many grasshoppers, which encamp on the fences in the day of cold; the sun is arisen, and they are fled, and their place, where they are, is no more known.

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[3] *Strips;* or spreads; it may be, strips itself, or the bushes.

[4] *Coroneted, Minnĕzārim, Princelings, Taph-sarim,* are imagined, with little reason, to be Assyrian words.

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agree with those who apply the image to the invaders. Fires are used, as we saw in Joel, to exterminate locusts.

17. Shepherds here, in the Homeric sense, chieftains, or shepherds of the people. The points of rallying lost, the mass is scattered. 18. The wound of Nineveh was not healed, because the seat of empire was transferred to Babylon, for which subsequently new centres were substituted, as Seleucia, Ctesiphon, Bagdad. No divine exsecration excluded building from the spot, upon which in the revival of the newer Persian empire a city arose, which in the fourth century of our era is called flourishing. In the twelfth century, Benjamin of Tudela describes it as separated from Mosul by only a bridge, and as containing, in spite of its destruction, many villages and fortresses. Marsham (Can. Chron. Sec. xviii.) has collected these testimonies, the credibility of which is not impaired by the pictures of far later writers. The town was important enough for Tacitus to mention it, 'capta in transitu urbs Ninos, vetustissima sedes Assyriorum.' Annal. xii. 13.

Unless a passage in Zephaniah (which I hope to shew

17. Thy shepherds, king of Assur, are in *dead* slumber, thy nobles in *their last* abode; scattered are thy people upon the mountains, and there is none that gathereth:

18. There is no healing[5] of thy bruise, thy wound is grievous: all that hear report of thee clap the hand over thee; for upon whom overflowed not thy wickedness continually?

[5] *Healing*, or hiding. Vulg. non est obscura contritio tua.

is retrospective), should be an exception, we have seen the last of Assur's empire. The city from which a planner of evil against Jehovah went forth is a pool of waters. The people of Jehovah, destined to as hard a fate, has sung by the mouth of Nahum a pæan over its enemy. If the sound of Ehud's dagger or Jael's hammer traverses the strain, or if the feeling native to Western Europe, which refuses to taunt the fallen, finds (with transient exception for David's relenting over old acquaintance) little echo in Hebrew literature, we may plead that barbarity had done much to extinguish such a feeling. Mutilation and massacre, second only to Ecclesiastical persecution in suggesting doubts of the Divine government of the world, marked the history of Nineveh, and are recorded in her monuments. The Prophet deemed such things an outrage to his people, and a defiance to the God of humanity. May no rule, or act, for which this country is responsible, fall under a similar condemnation.

A view unlike to Nahum's may be found in Byron's Sardanapalus. Whether this, or Saracus, be the last king's name, a Sardanapalus built Anchiale and Tarsus in one day, and left in his epitaph a precept insolent and desponding, which contrasts strangely with those of a native of one of his cities:—

"I reigned o'er mighty Ninus, and am dust;
And what I ate, or wantonly enjoyed,
Was mine: all other wealth and pomp dissolved;"[6]

whereas a follower of St. Paul says:

"Quod expendi, habui,
Quod servavi, perdidi,
Quod donavi, habeo:"

and in sounder strain the doctor of the spirit against the letter says: "I know whom I have trusted, and am per-"suaded that he is able to keep that which I have com-"mitted to him against the day."

[6] Athenæus, viii. p. 366, and xii. p. 529.

END OF THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH UNDER THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE.